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TO OUR READERS:

In compliance with the Israeli military authorities, and under the guise of the much criticized "Emergency Regulations" of 1945, Al-Fajr is required to submit all material prepared for publication in this weekly, and also in the Arabic Daily and Bi-Weekly Hebrew Edition, to the Israeli censorship authorities, who use this blanket authority excessively. The material appearing on pages labeled with letters has all been censored and expunged by the Israeli authorities. We found it necessary and relevant to publish it on these pages in the foreign edition.

US-made F-15's on display. The Jordanian regime has accepted US proposals for US$250 million in planes and arms, for a Jordanian based Rapid Deployment Force.

US Assembles Jordanian RDF

Israel Radio reported, October 13, that the Hashemite regime has accepted US proposals to form a Jordanian based and manned Rapid Deployment Force for intervention in Arab countries, mainly in the Arab Gulf area. US$250 million was to be allocated for the project in planes and arms.

The US plan was begun almost four years ago after anti-Saudi regime elements occupied the main mosque in Mecca and threatened to topple the Saudi monarchy, according to Israeli reports. Lieutenant-General Zeid Ben Shaker, Jordanian chief of staff, stated in the Jordanian news agency October 17 that Jordan has helped Gulf states and other Arab states militarily for the past 25 years. He claimed that Israel released the information "in order to foil efforts by Jordan to obtain sophisticated arms from the USA."

Stop Press

A Lebanese gendarme was killed in continued fighting in South Beirut, October 20, according to Israel Radio. There were also reports of continued artillery duels around Souq al-Garb, above the Lebanese capital. For full details on the fighting this week in and around Beirut, see page 2.

Massive Nabatiya Revolt Against Israeli Occupiers

by Livia Rokach
Our Rome Correspondent

At least 15 Lebanese civilians were wounded, October 16, five of them seriously, by occupation troops who assaulted a crowd of over 50,000 Shi'ites assembled in Nabatiya from all over South Lebanon to celebrate *ashura*. A local correspondent for a Western news organisation, an eye witness to the massacre, said in a telephone interview that the assault on the unarmed crowd occurred shortly after the explosion of two dynamite charges which decimated an occupation force on patrol in the town. There were eight casualties, though it is not known whether they were dead or wounded. Four military vehicles and an Israeli-sponsored "National Guard" militia jeep were destroyed in the incident. (Israeli spokesmen denied suffering any casualties in the incident – ed.).

The witness said that thousands of people left mosques where prayers and ceremonies were being held to commemorate the martyrdom of Hussein, the prophet Mohammed's grandson, who is revered by the Shi'ites. After the bomb went off, they found numbers of occupation forces reinforcements assaulting the town and sealing it off. The troops then began wildly shooting at the crowd, who reacted by stoning and cursing them, the witness reported.

The agency correspondent reported that in the confusion which ensued as the injured civilians were rushed to the local clinic by spontaneously organised volunteers quads, the crowd fired at two more troop-carrying vehicles which were trying to advance into the town overpacked with people. Many of those in the crammed streets were seeking shelter, others continued to pray and celebrate unperturbed, while the rest vocally expressed their rage against the occupation forces.

In fact, the source reported, the entire population felt the occupation patrol attempt at an incursion was a deliberate provocation, and they were united in support of the resistance action "intended to counter it and uphold the dignity of the people." It was known for days in advance that the *ashura* festivities would see large crowds in Nabatiya over the weekend who would not tolerate the presence of foreign invaders during their spiritual gathering.

As the troops were shooting at the crowd, the patrol casualties were evacuated by helicopter to Israel under the cover

continued on page 4

Local Plaintiffs in US Suit Barred from Press Conference

Several of the fourteen plaintiffs in a US federal suit against the US government asking that the tax-exempt status of Zionist organisations be removed were prevented from attending their own press conference at the American Colony Hotel, October 16. Another was detained as he left the conference.

Fired al-Bireh Mayor Ibrahim Tawil was ordered by the local military authorities not to attend the conference or to meet with other plaintiffs to discuss the case; co-plaintiffs mayors Bassam Shaka'a, Karim Khalaf and Wahid Hamdallah of Nablus, Ramallah and Anabta are all under standing military orders which prevent them from leaving their towns.

The plaintiffs' US attorney Mark Lane angrily attacked the authorities' actions, stating, "The normal processes of civilised countries do not apply here." He pointed out that in the US, anyone caught interfering with a pending court case is jailed.

Lane told the sparsely attended conference that the plaintiffs were demanding the removal of tax-exempt status from the World Zionist Organisation American section, the Jewish Agency American section, the United Israel Appeal, the United Jewish Appeal, the Jewish National Fund and real estate agency Americans for a Safe Israel. He said the organisations, all New York-based, violate US tax-exempt status law by collecting and sending money to Israel where it is used "to steal land, divert water, build settlements on Palestinian land and to deny the rights of the Palestinian people."

West Bank landowners Ahmad Sbeih, from Aqraba, Seif Mustafa, Jawdat Hamad and Abd al-Haq Hassan each described how their property had been grabbed by the Israeli military or private companies in the course of settlement activities.

Rabbi Moshe Hirsch of the anti-Zionist Neturei Karta movement, also a plaintiff in the case and a US citizen, told journalists the organisations mentioned in the suit contradict US policy and deceive the US public by "claiming to represent Jewish goals." He also said that Israel's policy of "conscripting our people to the Israeli army to war against people we have lived amicably with," violates the US policy which views Jerusalem as international territory.

Felicia Langer, on the plaintiffs' legal team here, expressed regret that her clients were prevented from joining the press conference and meeting together to discuss the case.

From his home in Nablus, Bassam Shaka'a told *Al Fajr* the decision to ban the mayors "is a continuation of the Israeli policy of oppression against the residents of the occupied territories. It is a racist policy and proves the occupation has no respect for our rights."

Rabbi Hirsch was detained by waiting police officers as he left the hotel after the conference. He said the police told him their Jerusalem commander "wanted to speak" to him. He was arrested when he refused to go voluntarily. Hirsch put his arrest down to "harassment" after the attack on West Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek last week. Police had earlier raided Hirsch's Mea Sharim home at 4:00 am but left after he and his wife shouted to their neighbours for help.

Hirsch was detained for 24 hours.

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Shi'ite worshippers praying at al-Hussein Mosque in Burj al-Barajneh, south Beirut, on the occasion of *ashura day* remembrance ceremonies.

Lebanon Cease-fire in a Shambles

by Livia Rokach Our Rome Correspondent

October 19 — As expected, the cease-fire decreed in Lebanon on September 26 is already in a shambles. Since Sunday, battles are raging in Beirut itself, around the capital and in Souq al-Gharb and Eklim al-Kharub in the Shouf, with both Lebanese Army and Multinational Force units suffering new casualties. An attempt to declare a new cease-fire on Tuesday failed.

Battles in south Beirut and the Shouf erupted on Tuesday, October 18, with heavy artillery and rocket exchanges resulting in the death of eight people and the wounding of 27.

The National Salvation Front announced that its leaders will not attend the reconciliation conference at Beirut airport, and Lebanese President Amin Gemayel later said that the conference due to be held on October 20 was postponed. In a press conference in the Shouf village of Mukhtara, October 19, Jumblatt stated, "We want to attend the conference but not at the airport because it is not safe." The Front demands that the conference either be held at Geneva, Switzerland, or aboard a Greek ship flying a Lebanese flag.

It is already clear to observers in Beirut that Amin Gemayel's convocation of the conference for Thursday was meant more as a gesture to meet American pressures to stage something resembling national dialogue than as a serious political effort leading to the solution of Lebanon's problems. In fact, on the same day that the preparatory committee declared agreement on the agenda of the conference, Amin Gemayel, in an hysterical interview to *The New York Times*, complained that the conference was imposed on him by Washington, and accused the partners of the projected dialogue, namely the National Salvation Front and Amal, of "not being free to express their positions" because they are allegedly Syrian subordinates. Gemayel tried again to belittle the importance of dealing with the fundamental political problems of Lebanon — namely the need for radical legislative, administrative, economic and social reforms leading to equal power-sharing by all Lebanese communities.

Shortly after Gemayel's interview, the Lebanese Army launched a series of violations of the cease-fire, in an attempt to erode the resistance positions on the various fronts. Well-prepared for this eventuality, the resistance forces returned fire. The airport area, where the conference was supposed to meet, has since Sunday been the centre of furious battles. The main road to the US Marines' base was cut off by Shi'ite combatants and the Khalde-Beirut road was under the control of snipers. Two Marines were killed and seven wounded in this area in three days of fighting. Four more Marines were wounded, October 19, when a car bomb exploded as they passed the Kuwaiti Embassy in south Beirut.

Mortar and machine gun fire extended in these three days to almost all areas of south Beirut, from Chiyah to Bir al-Abed, to Moalem and to Sfair, where the Lebanese Army is reported to have suffered many casualties. There was fighting with automatic arms, October 18, at Galerie Samaan crossing and, at noon, around the Palestinian camp of Burj al-Barajneh, while Amal militants set up a roadblock near the Kuwaiti Embassy. In the latter two areas, four Italian soldiers of the MNF were wounded in the past three days by what the Italian command described as "stray bullets."

In the Shouf, where since the proclamation of the cease-fire battles have continued intermittently, fighting escalated on Tuesday in the Souq al-Gharb sector, with Druze forces heavily shelling Lebanese Army positions from their bases in Ras al-Aqel and Hai al-Gharby.

On Tuesday, a unit of 12 Israeli tanks crossed the Awali northwards to the village of Barja in the Shouf province of Eklim al-Kharub, where a pocket of Phalangist militiamen was surrendering to constant resistance pressure.

According to the September 26 cease-fire agreement, Phalangist militias were to evacuate all their remaining positions in this predominantly Muslim Sunni province, where they had resisted thanks to interventions by the occupation forces in the south on their behalf. Following their evacuation, the Lebanese internal security corps (*gendarmerie*) should have taken position in these villages, with the agreement of the NSF. Due to the continuing Ismeli support, however, this exchange never took place, and the resistance forces proceeded to besiege and shell the Phalangist pockets which, completely exhausted, decided to evacuate. The occupation force's move thus represents a major intrusion in support of the violation of the US-sponsored cease-fire.

As complete uncertainty now surrounds the situation in Lebanon, on both the political and military levels, the Italian and Greek governments announced six conditions for sending observers to supervise an eventually resumed cease-fire. The most important among these is the demand that a protocol, signed by all parties to the conflict and specifying the conditions for the observers' eventual operations, should be submitted to both governments. Politically, this request equals a formal recognition of the resistance front on the same level as that of the Lebanese government.

Meanwhile, the Yugoslav government seemed reluctant to participate in the observers corps. Earlier they had been slated to provide reserves for the observer corps. The possibility that Spanish observers will be requested instead from Madrid is confirmed by sources in Felipe Gonzales' government. The Spanish socialist government's positions on the Lebanese situation is reported to be identical to that of Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou.

Agenda of the 'Reconciliation' Conference

The agenda contains all the issues which were at the root of the start of the Lebanese crisis, which determined the outbreak of the civil war in 1975, and the solution to which will determine whether Lebanon will continue to exist as a sovereign, independent and united Arab state.

The agenda of the works of the Lebanese "National Reconciliation Conference" as agreed upon by a preparatory committee composed of representatives of the parties to the conflict — the Lebanese government, "Lebanese forces" and Phalangist party on one hand, the National Salvation Front and Amal on the other — is articulated in the following four points:

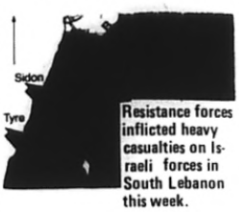
1. The end of the Israeli occupation and the withdrawal from Lebanon of all foreign forces;

2. A clear definition of the identity of Lebanon, of its links to the Arab world, and its international relations;

3. The political, economic, social, administrative and financial reforms needed in order to guarantee equality of rights to all citizens beyond their confessional or communitary belonging;

4. The re-organisation of the armed forces and the means to accord the state its authority over the entire country.

Casualties in Lebanon Wear Israel Down



Resistance forces inflicted heavy casualties on Israeli forces in South Lebanon this week.

Two Israeli soldiers died and nine were injured in various attacks by Lebanese resistance forces in occupied South Lebanon this week. There were almost daily clashes between the Israeli army and the population in Nabatiya, Sidon and Tyre areas in which rockets and hand grenades were used. At least six Israeli jeeps were destroyed in the week's attacks. Israeli officials and outside commentators expressed pessimism about the fate of occupation troops in Lebanon.

The Israeli military spokesman officially announced in Tel Aviv, October 19, that two soldiers had been killed and a third injured in an ambush by Lebanese resistance fighters in Sidon, October 18. The incident occurred when two army patrols on duty in Sidon were hit by bazooka rockets and automatic weapons fire. Hand grenades were also thrown at the jeeps from a nearby building. Israeli troops returned fire, but the attackers apparently disappeared.

According to the Israeli report, two of the soldiers died immediately and a third was rushed to hospital. Both jeeps were damaged. The spokesman said that more troops were rushed to the area in a combing operation for the attackers.

This incident, according to the spokesman, brought the officially announced number of Israeli casualties to 512 dead since the invasion in June 1982.

In another ambush, October 15, eight Israeli soldiers were reported injured near Nabatiya when four Israeli jeeps were burned by angry southern Lebanese. Israeli spokesmen, while acknowledging the incident, denied any casualties. The attack occurred after Israeli troops shot at Shi'ite worshippers in Nabatiya while celebrating the feast of *ashura* (see page 1).

Unconfirmed reports detailed the explosion of land mines and other guerrilla attacks on Israeli patrols in the Tyre area and on the coastal road linking Tyre to Sidon. Two French UNIFIL soldiers were injured when an explosive device went off on the side of the road north of Sidon, October 15. The extent of their injuries was not disclosed by the UNIFIL spokesman.

An Israeli official spokesman also acknowledged that three Katyusha rockets were fired at Israeli positions south of the Awali river, October 18. No official reports of casualties were given.

Israeli military figures spoke openly about the dangers troops are facing in South Lebanon. Mattityahu Peled, a reserve army general and currently a peace activist, told the press that the army will always be a target in South Lebanon. Israeli Chief of Staff Moshe Levy said that he is certain that attacks on Israeli troops in Lebanon would continue.

According to *The Jerusalem Post* of October 19, Levy said "the only way to avoid being hurt is not to be there."

THIS WEEK'S CENSORSHIP

Following is a breakdown of censorship cuts for issue 181, October 21, 1983:

Number of original articles submitted to censors	22
Number of articles totally censored out	3
Number of articles mutilated beyond use	1
Number of articles partially censored but used	1
Number of articles passed	17

Licensed Houses Demolished

The deputy military governor of Hebron notified the acting mayor of Halhoul, Hijazzi Medieh, October 14, of the intention of Israeli authorities to demolish two licensed houses and one stone-cutting plant in the town. The officer said the buildings would be razed "for public purposes." . . . . . .

Import Tax on Sheep Up 2000 Percent

Israeli military authorities upped import fees on a shipment of sheep by 2000 percent, October 16. According to sources in Gaza, the move could presage much higher meat prices in the occupied territories.

The Mortaja Company, an import-export establishment in Gaza, had worked out an agreement with the Israeli authorities allowing them to export Gaza citrus to and import sheep from Yugoslavia.

The citrus was exported in April 1983, but when the first shipment of sheep arrived at Ashdod port on October 16, the Gaza company discovered high taxes had been added to the import license.

Israeli customs officials had added US$1.50 tax per kilogram on imported sheep. Najai Mortaja, spokesperson for the company, explained that the fee represents a vast increase over the former IS70 per head."Considering that a sheep weighs 20-30 kilograms, you can see how high the tax will be," he explained. Mortaja told *Al Fajr* that he offered to sell the Israeli government the sheep on the spot at cost plus 10 percent. The Mortaja Company had sent a local veterinarian to Yugoslavia, at Israeli request, to make sure the imported sheep were disease-free.

The director of the Gaza department of trade told *Al Fajr* that the high fees were only applied as a result of extreme pressure by the Israeli livestock breeders union. But Mortaja pointed out that according to the agreement with the authorities, the sheep were only going to be sold in the West Bank and Gaza.

Officials in Gaza's agriculture and trade departments told *Al Fajr* that they are attempting to work out a deal with the Israeli authorities in which the fees would be cancelled or reduced.

No official response could be obtained from the Israeli officials despite repeated calls by *Al Fajr*.

ACRE ACTIVISTS ARRESTED

Maysara Sayed, an Abna' al-Balad activist in Acre, was arrested, October 18, on unspecified security charges. Sayed, a senior student at the Technion in Haifa, was a member of the Abna' al-Balad delegation which attended the UN Conference on the Question of Palestine last month.

Advocate Mohammed Miari, member of the secretariat of the Committee for the Defence of Land, was arrested late October 17. No reason was given in his case either. Lawyer Moshe Ammar is representing both men.

PPS Head to Sue Israel TV for Libel

Raymonda Tawil is demanding, through her lawyer, an apology from Israel Television for broadcasting a false report implying that she has been fired from her position as general manager of the Palestine Press Service, East Jerusalem. Tawil also flatly denied the report, carried by Israel TV in a broadcast, October 15, that funds she received earmarked for the development of *Al-Awdah* magazine were placed in a personal bank account in Amman.

Ms Tawil's lawyer, Amnon Zikhroni, told *Al Fajr* that he received a call from Tawil asking him to represent her in a libel suit against Israel TV. Zikhroni also said that he received calls from veteran Israeli peace activist General Mattityahu Peled and sympathisers in Paris and New York objecting to the "false report." Zikhroni has written to Israel TV and demanded a full transcript of the *Mabat* Hebrew news, which carried the report. He also demanded an apology and is planning to represent Tawil's libel suit against Israel television.

Al Fajr Arabic daily published Tawil's denial on the front page, October 17. The following day the Palestine Press Service office published a similar denial, saying the TV report "aimed at inciting against the Palestine Press Service offices and *Al-Awdah* magazine."

Deadly Intersection Still Unregulated

Two women pedestrians were killed after being struck by a car on the main Ramallah-Jerusalem road, October 13. Their deaths have led to renewed calls for proper traffic controls in this part of East Jerusalem.

Samiha Yaqoub Badrieh, 57, and Maliha Shakr Husseini, 60, were killed as they attempted to cross the road near the gas station in Sheikh Jarrah. They were struck by a Ford at around 6:30 pm. Ambulances and the police arrived on the scene immediately but the two women died on the way to Hadassah Hospital.

Residents of the area attribute this incident and others like it to the great speed at which cars drive in the area and to the absence of traffic signs at the nearby five-way cross roads. Jacki Abu Salem, who lives near the junction, explained to *Al Fajr* that two major streams of traffic from Ramallah and West Jerusalem intersect at these two streets, and "it is always a dangerous spot."

According to residents of the area, a 6-year-old child was killed and another seriously injured in the past year. During the same period, one woman had both legs amputated after an accident and another suffered bruises.

At least 1500 elementary and preparatory pupils attend four schools, including a kindergarten and a Swiss handicapped school, in the area.

Hikmat Ansari, the principal of the local kindergarten with 500 students, told *Al Fajr* that "constant danger threatens the lives of the students who come every day from outlying villages." She has organised the teachers and some older students to look after her students. The crossroads needs traffic signs and covered bus stops for students who wait for buses there, they say.

FROM HOLY CITY TO SPORTS CITY?

Orthodox Jews Assault Kollek

The Jerusalem police, the Kollek municipality, the Agudat Israel party, the Israeli Knesset, Israeli President Herzog and the Israeli media all reacted angrily to the beating and insulting of Israeli mayor of Jerusalem Teddy Kollek as he campaigned in a religious quarter in Jerusalem.

Kollek, who is seeking re-election as mayor on a Labour party-dominated ticket, was attacked after he left the Persian synagogue in the Buchari neighbourhood in Jerusalem, October 15. He left his car on the outskirts of the religious neighbourhood because of the Jewish Sabbath and was surrounded by Orthodox Jews who objected to his presence there, "in view of his anti-religious stand," according to one.

Over 200 Orthodox Jews, mainly supporters of the ultra-religious Agudat Israel party who are on a collision course with Kollek over plans for a co-ed swimming pool in Ramot settlement, according to one veteran observer in the Orthodox Jewish communities, shouted anti-Kollek slogans, reprimanding him for calls to burn down Mea Sharim and convert the "holy city into a sports capital." The zealots finally pushed Kollek to the ground and kicked him until he was rescued by members of the Jerusalem police force. He was slightly injured.

The beating incident brought sharp reactions from members of the Israeli establishment. The Israeli Knessest will discuss the matter in an open session soon.

The Agudat Israel party, which was politically embarrassed by the attack carried out in its neighbourhood, posted an IS 10,000 reward for any information that would lead to the arrest of Kollek's attackers and Israel's President Chaim Herzog denounced the attack. Israel's major newspapers gave it front-page coverage and many newspapers ran critical editorials.

The incident was followed by what has been described as a "massive pre-dawn wave of arrests" in Mea Sharim, the Jewish anti-Zionist stronghold. Three men were held for the assault but have not been charged.

The religious struck back in a wall-poster campaign throughout the city. Printed slogans called Kollek "a traitor and informer" and accused him of turning over Zionist Revisionists to the British police in 1948.

Bassam Shaka'a

SHAKA'A'S TORMENTERS HIT

A Molotov cocktail was thrown at the Israeli military patrol assigned to monitor the movements of Nablus's elected mayor Bassam Shaka'a on Palestine Street in Nablus, October 19. No casualties were reported.

PARTIAL CURFEW ON DHEISHEH

Dheisheh camp, near Bethlehem, was partially curfewed October 19, after a bus carrying Israeli soldiers was stoned by Palestinian youths.

The bus was travelling on the Jerusalem-Hebron road when it was attacked. Another Israeli vehicle was stoned while travelling on the main Jerusalem-Nablus road, October 19.

WORKERS ROUND-UP

A number of Palestinian workers were detained in Kufr Saba, near Tel Aviv, October 18, after police defused a large explosive device discovered near the bus station minutes before it was due to go off.

Abna al-Balad Barred from Sakhnin Elections

The Abna' al-Balad movement in Sakhnin has appealed to the Israeli High Court in objection to the local election board's decision not to allow them to run in the local council elections due to take place October 25.

Lawyers for the Palestinian progressive national movement will tell the court that the local election supervisory board director, Ibrahim Khoury, erred in his handling of their election list. A Haifa magistrates court has already rejected the party's request.

Abna' al-Balad activists and their election agent Ali Ghanim say that the "outside forces were adamant at stopping our party from running in the local council elections." Ghanim said he and 15 Abna' al-Balad activists handed the movement's list of candidates to the election board at the proper time. They had carefully checked that there were no erasures or corrections on the copy of the list they submitted — a frequent reason for disqualification.

The Sakhnin election board director accepted the list, looked at it and filed it, giving agent Ghanim a receipt. Fifteen days later, and after election entries were no longer allowed, the board informed Ghanim that his list was rejected. He said the name heading the list, Mohammed Abu Rayya, had been "whited-out" and rewritten again.

Lawyer Salim Wakim immediately took the case to the Haifa magistrates court. The court refused to rescind the election board's decision, but admitted in their decision that Khoury erred in accepting a "marked" list and he further erred in not informing the list's agent within two days, as stated by law.

Abna' al-Balad activists in Sakhnin are hoping that the Israeli High Court will allow their list to be included in the coming October 25 elections. If not, the movement's lawyers are planning to file a suit asking for the election to be postponed until the technical irregularities are solved and all the groups which handed in lists on time be allowed to participate.

The movement has also filed a forgery suit against the local election board, saying they are directly responsible for the mix-up.

"Where has all the money gone? The West Bank swallowed it up!" read some Peace Now demonstrators' placards outside the prime minister's office in Jerusalem, October 16.

Histadrut 'Steam-vent' Strike 'Warns' Israeli Government

Businesses and public services in Israel shuttered, October 16, as a series of partial work stoppages by one million Israeli workers cut into the working day. The strike was called by the Histadrut Trade Union Department to protest last week's economic plans, announced in the wake of the banking and currency collapse, and to "warn" the government against tampering with the cost-of-living allowances.

According to Israeli reports, teachers, airport workers, public service employees, shop assistants and factory workers walked off the job for two hours during the day in the protest. Only the semi-public bus companies and the railways kept working all day.

There were demonstrations in West Jerusalem, Holon and Ashdod, where a full-day strike was 90 percent successful, according to Histadrut sources.

As well as protesting the 23 percent devaluation of the shekel and the 50 percent price-hike announced last week after an emergency cabinet session, Histadrut officials also expressed concern that the conflict with the authorities be defused and their control of labour affairs be maintained.

Israel Kesser, head of the Histadrut Trade Union section, told *The Jerusalem Post* October 16 the strike was needed to let off steam and keep all workers under Histadrut control. Other officials said they were concerned that if they took no action, wildcat strikes would break out. Commenting on the devaluation and recent price rise, Kesser said, "We can't keep the system quiet."

Histadrut head, Labour MK Yoram Meshel, said that as their economists estimate prices will rise by another 50 percent by next January when they are due the next quarterly cost-of-living rise, they would be putting in for an advance. He threatened escalated action if the government ignored this process.

Peace Now Protests Settlement Financing

Thirty Peace Now supporters demonstrated, October 16, outside the Israeli prime minister's office against the money spent on West Bank settlements. The demonstrators set up an altar made of milk, margarine, sugar and flour to symbolise the idea that the Israelis are sacrificing food to government subsidies on settlement housing.

Amiram Goldblum, a Peace Now spokesman, told *Al Fajr*, "Settlements are one of the reasons behind the collapse of the Israeli economy. Israel cannot tell the public that it can do everything, including building settlements and invading Lebanon at the same time, without sacrificing the standard of living."

Six months ago, Peace Now activists distributed a booklet entitled *Everything You Did Not Want to Know About Settlements on the West Bank*. According to the booklet, the Israeli authorities want to settle 100,000 Israelis on the West Bank at a cost of at least US$3 billion.

Committee to Oversee Mosque Reconstruction

The 10-member *ad hoc* committee for the renovation of Hassan Bek Mosque in Jaffa called, October 18, on all local Muslims to attend a meeting at the Islamic club, October 20, to elect a formal committee to oversee the mosque and discuss the delays in its reconstruction.

Nassim Shaqr, member of the *ad hoc* committee, told *Al Fajr* that after elections, it will be the responsibility of the Hassan Bek Renovation Committee to set a building schedule and to pressure the Israeli ministry of religious affairs to release *waqf* (Islamic charitable) funds gathered in the town to them rather than the Israeli-appointed *waqf* trustees. "The first emergency step is to renovate one room to enable Muslims to perform prayers in the mosque this winter," said Shaqr.

Members of the *ad hoc* committee say they do not believe the authorities mean to renovate the mosque.

Meanwhile, the Islamic *waqf* administration, headed by Abed Kabub, published ads in local papers calling for contractors to present estimates for Hassan Bek renovation. Kabub was not available to comment on the delays in the renovation.

The minaret collapsed last spring in suspicious circumstances, and since then the prime minister's advisor for Arab affairs, Binyamin Gur Ariev, has said several times that the Israeli government has put aside US$1,000,000 for work on the mosque.

After Abed Kabub called the police, last week, to evict volunteer workmen from the site, signs have appeared forbidding entry to the mosque.

continued from page 1

NABATIYA

of other armed helicopters flying low over the town. These flights continued for many hours while curfew was clamped on the town and massive searches started "with a view to tracing the guerillas," the source surmised. Round-ups and mass arrests in Nabatiya and throughout the area, which remains besieged and isolated, are reported.

300 Arrested

In contrast with statements by official spokesmen, on Wednesday morning, October 19, Nabatiya was still encircled by tank units of the occupation forces, and the curfew was still in full force. Reporters trying to reach the town from Beirut were turned back. Sources in the town, reached by phone, confirmed on Tuesday evening that the population is rounded-up under military guard in the central square. Homes were ordered left open for searches and those found closed were broken into. More than 300 persons are known to have been arrested in Nabatiya alone. Among them 60 women.

Sunday's events are bound, according to well-informed observers, to further heighten tensions and c[illegible] in occupied South Lebanon in coming weeks. On Sunday, the spiritual leader of the Shi'ites in Lebanon, Sheikh Mohammed Mehdi Shams al-Din, called for a stepping up of the resistance to the occupation in the south and warned the occupation authorities against realising their repeated threats to seal off the occupied area by closing the Awali River bridges. "Any collaboration with Israel is totally in contrast to our religion," he said.

In his Nabatiya speech, Sheikh Shams al-Din called for all confessional, social and political organisations to unite and coordinate against the Israeli authorities. He outlined six principles for the resistance: that dealing with the occupation is absolutely illegal and should be considered treasonous; the boycotting of everyone who cooperates with the Israelis; that all Lebanese, especially in South Lebanon, should "cling to their land"; the maintenance of solidarity between all Lebanese factions; the exertion of pressure on the authorities to maintain Lebanese National institutions, to "foil the schemes of the occupation" and to counter the Israeli arrest campaign.

Meanwhile, in Tyre, there were further reports of Shi'ite demonstrations. Some reports said Israeli soldiers opened fire on the demonstrations, but there were no reports of casualties.

Reports from the south over the past few weeks say there have been daily military resistance actions in the area south of the Awali fortifications. Renewed efforts at setting up, recruiting and training pro-occupation Shi'ite militias have only resulted in stronger and deeper resentment on the part of the population as a whole. Fear of being recruited by forces into these militias pushes an increasing number of young people to join the ranks of the resistance.

The assassination, October 6, of Hussein Wehbe, a major exponent of the "national guard," has also had its effects. Wehbe was killed in a bomb explosion in his car in the village of Adlun, considered in the past as an occupation stronghold.

There is constant speculation in South Lebanon that under the pressure of continuing losses the occupation army may soon carry out another pullback and set up a new defence line along the Zahrani River. The renewal of last winter's massive propaganda campaign — that the only protection for the population is in the continued Israeli military presence in the area, staving off inter-factional fighting — among other things, can be taken to confirm that certain pressures in this direction do exist, observers [illegible] the local scene say. In any case, one thing is certain — and Sunday's events, the intensified spirit of resistance in the south and the determination of the population to force out the occupation reconfirm it: the heavy and enormously costly construction and fortification works along the Awali River have been to no avail. It is doubtful that a repetition of the same works and investments along the Zahrani will bring the occupation forces better luck.

The Dawn
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SOLE AND LEGITIMATE

In the last couple of days, Western and Middle Eastern news media reported statements by several Palestinian personalities, in both military and political ranks of various Palestinian organisations, saying that they do not recognise Yasir Arafat as chairman of the PLO Executive Committee and that he does not represent the Palestinian people. Is there a poll being taken among the Palestinian people to elect a new representative? If so, who called for this poll and for what purpose? These questions are in the minds of every Palestinian in the occupied territories.

To the Palestinians, scattered all over the world, there is only one legitimate body representing them: the PLO. This organisation has gained its status through the wise policies adopted by its members in keeping and safeguarding the Palestinian people's rights.

Any resolution adopted by the highest or lowest representative body within the PLO has always obtained the support of all the Palestinian people, except for those who collaborate with the enemy of this people and the beneficiaries of certain Arab regimes.

Changes in the policies adopted by either the Palestine National Council, Central Council or the Executive Committee are never executed by individuals outside democratic channels. The backing and support for the PLO by the Palestinian people has never, and will never, allow such a practice despite the pressure used by outside forces of evil, whether they are known or hidden enemies.

The Palestinian people and their sole representative – the PLO – have always surprised the world with the courageous steps they have taken to protect themselves from destruction, decisions always within the framework of the concept of democracy.

The Palestinian people under occupation are fully confident that through the use of the only constructive tool – democratic channels – the PLO will transcend the present dangers, thus protecting its independence, its revolutionary nature and its legitimate existence, and, ultimately, will continue as the legitimate leader of the Palestinians.

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Removal by Any Means

by Ghassan Bishara
Our Washington DC Correspondent

Less than a year after the greatest military challenge ever to the PLO, in West Beirut, a new and potentially more dangerous one is now underway in Tripoli, North Lebanon. With its Lebanese allies, the PLO last year came out of West Beirut proud of having stopped Sharon and Israeli Chief of Staff Rafael Eitan short of their goal. Similarly, observers believe, the PLO will override the new Syrian threat.

During last year's siege of Beirut, with approximately 120,000 Israeli troops present in Lebanon, many observers believed that the PLO would simply be crushed. However, the PLO and their allies, with their backs to the wall, stood up to the Israeli army; the defence ministry, headed by the most militaristic men the Israeli war machine could produce, Sharon and Eitan, was made to scale down its objectives in Lebanon and in the city of Beirut. The stalemate which was created by the PLO and Lebanese allies' determination to stand and not to break in the face of the Israeli army, observers now believe, planted the seeds for the second round of attacks now underway against the PLO.

The rationale for what is going on now in and around Tripoli in Lebanon is two-fold: a determination, basically by the US, to remove the PLO from Lebanon altogether – reports from North Lebanon testify that the Syrian Army's involvement in this process is starkly clear; and, the refusal of the PLO leaders to admit that the departure from Beirut was a defeat.

In Washington DC in the meantime, commentators Evans and Novak, in a commentary in *The Washington Post* last week, go so far as to suggest that there is an agreement between the US and the government of Syria to remove the PLO from the Shouf mountains and ultimately out of Lebanon, in exchange for recognition by the US of a role for Syria in Lebanon. Syria, according to senior Palestinian officials in Tripoli, had begun to deliver its part of the deal, once again, the official continued, without assurances that the US could deliver its part. *Al Fajr* was told this week by State Department spokesperson John Hughes that US policy is unchanged in this regard, aiming at the removal of all foreign forces from Lebanon. Asked about the Syrian role in removing the PLO from Lebanon, Hughes said he would not go into confidential exchanges between the two governments.

"Would the US government," we asked, "support efforts now underway by Syria to remove the PLO from Lebanon?" To this, Hughes replied, "Well, obviously we favour the removal of the PLO from Lebanon by any means. . . " Hughes later moderated his remarks by saying that his government would rather have the PLO removed peacefully and without killing.

The other part of the two-fold rationale is the refusal, dissidents in Fatah say, to admit that the departure from West Beirut – which is having implications in events now taking place in Tripoli – was a defeat for the PLO, for which its leaders should be held accountable. This is, among other reasons dissidents say, a cause for their opposition in the Beqa'a, which opponents say created the atmosphere for the Syrian government to clamp down on the PLO fighters and leaders.

Palestinians React

"We are not given breathing space," said Qassem, a Palestinian student at a Washington university, angrily describing the PLO siege in northern Lebanon. "If it's not Israel then it's an Arab 'brotherly' country," said Wa'il, another student from the Midwest, attending a conference called by the Palestine Conference of North America. Others attending the conference, supporters of the PFLP, DFLP, and Fatah among others, also sounded their criticism for what they believe the Syrian government is doing, while at the same time calling for reforms within Fatah and the PLO.

The conference, held in Washington DC, October 8-9, and attended by selected individuals, replaced a nation-wide open biennial convention. High on the list of priorities of most speakers was Palestinian unity, which they argued was the target of those who supported the Israeli invasion. Kamal, a supporter of PFLP, said that Israel aimed at destroying all national existence through driving a wedge in Palestinian national unity. Pressures have been put on both the PFLP and the DFLP to support the dissent in the Beqa'a, but to no avail. Kamal said the PLO unity, having survived the siege at Beirut, had been hit on by political bombshells, and even while the PLO fighters are still in the Mediterranean Sea. He mentioned as examples the Reagan and Fez plans.

Kamal said that the dispute within Fatah should be resolved through a rational approach, in order to avoid Arab governments' tutelage over Fatah and then the PLO. Fatah unity, he said, is tantamount to PLO unity, and any disagreement within Fatah ranks should be resolved democratically, through democratic dialogue. "We are not neutral about what is happening in Fatah because we are not isolationists and are concerned," he said. The solution to the Fatah dispute, he continued, is in accepting the findings of the mediation commissions.

Jihad, a PFLP supporter, emphasised the same points as Kamal, adding that Palestinian officials ought to support and execute all PNC resolutions. He also said the Palestinians have paid and sacrificed to obtain the right to formulate their own independent decision-making apparatus, and this should be safeguarded and defended. He voiced his view in favour of reforms within Fatah, but he added what worries Palestinians everywhere is a permanent split within Fatah. Releases from the dissidents in the Beqa'a have criticised by name the secretary-general of DFLP, Nayef Hawatmeh, and its member on the PLO Executive Committee, Yasser Abed-Rabbo.

Assad, a Fatah supporter, argued that last year's war in Beirut proved that a drift away from the principles of Fatah's 'peoples war' had occurred. This drift created an "imbalance between the political and diplomatic efforts, and armed struggle – in favour of the former." He also criticised the Fez plan for a Middle East solution. He rejected a split within the ranks of Fatah and said that the choice for Fatah supporters is a continued dedication to that movement's basic principles: "Those who deviate from Fatah's basic principles are the separatists."

While critical of what they know is the Syrian government's role in the PLO's difficulties in the Beqa'a, some speakers tried hard to avoid direct attacks on the Assad government. Some speakers completely denied any such role for the Syrian government, while others openly and directly criticised the Syrian role "as trying to complete what Israel and the US failed to achieve last year." Abdullah accused the Syrian government of having stood by last year, complying with the terms of the cease-fire arranged by then US special envoy to the Middle East Philip Habib, while Beirut, with its Palestinian and Lebanese Arab people, suffered the most savage attacks at the hands of the Israeli Army.

Attempts by the Syrian government at weakening the PLO and even possibly finishing it as the world knows it, are shocking and scaring Palestinians everywhere. Wa'il and Qassem felt disturbed at the Arab governments' interference in the PLO and Palestinian affairs, which they labelled "negative meddling." They defended Fatah and PLO practices, they said, only because they opposed Syria or any other Arab government's interference in "our affairs." No Arab government can teach Palestinians how to resolve their differences or how to affect reforms, Qassem said, pointing out recent cases in many Arab governments, including Syria. "Had they left us alone," concluded Wa'il, "then we would have initiated reforms, where they were needed. Their interference in our affairs is naturally causing us to regroup in defence of our achievements and of our leaders."

OPINION

AL FAJR invites our readers to contribute letters, articles, and opinions. Contributions must be signed, but names may be withheld upon request.

A War Against the Arabs?

by Claudia Wright

Until the cease-fire in Lebanon was announced, the Reagan administration was moving slowly but wittingly into war with the Arabs of Lebanon. At the same time, the administration is taking strong measures against several of the Arab states usually considered American allies, as well as against two historically hostile Arab states that have tried to negotiate rapprochements with Washington — Iraq and Algeria.

This is strange behaviour for an administration that claims its mission in Lebanon in support of the Lebanese Army is necessary to demonstrate the credibility of US pledges to the security of friendly Arab states. Either the administration is confused, internally divided, and blundering from one crisis to the next; or else it has decided on projecting military power to impose US interests on Lebanon and the rest of the Arab world.

The last time US naval vessels shelled Lebanon was in June 1941, when British and Free French forces landed under cover of US gunfire to take control of Lebanon from the Vichy French administration allied with Germany. The last time US warships shelled Arab territory was in May 1943, in support of the Allied armies mopping up the remnants of the German Afrika Korps in Tunisia. Never before — not unless you count the Barbary and Tripolitan wars at the beginning of the 19th century — has a US government ever fought against the Arabs themselves. It is worth remembering that first episode. Between 1801 and 1805, the US used naval power and an expedition by ground forces to try to overthrow the Bey of Tripoli and instal his brother, then in exile in Egypt, in his place. That war was a failure and cost Washington $60,000 in ransom money to recover the crew of the USS *Philadelphia*, which had run onto a reef in Tripoli harbour and been captured by the Tripolitans.

The US war with Algiers in 1858 was a more profitable venture, militarily and commercially. It ended without the sizeable casualties of the Tripolitan war. US merchantmen captured by the Algerians were returned, along with a cash payment of $10,000. Algiers also lost a sizeable number of Christian slaves who managed to scramble on board Commadore Stephen Decatur's squadron in Algiers harbour. The US treaties with Tripoli and Algiers also provided security for US traders, missionaries and merchantmen who began to operate in increasing numbers along the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean.

Despite an interest in Washington during the late 19th century in establishing US "footholds" on the Mediterranean littoral to provide a military base and compete with the French and English in the scramble to markets and empire, the Americans didn't return in force to the region until World War II. And then, as a special Arabic message from President Roosevelt assured, only to set the Arabs free.

"Behold!" Roosevelt's Arabic message of November 8, 1943, had said. "We the American Holy Warriors have arrived. Our numbers are as the leaves on the forest trees and as the grains of sand in the sea. We have come here (Morocco, Algeria) to fight the great *Jihad* of Freedom. We have come to set you free."

The Roosevelt rhetoric proved to be an instant embarrassment, as many Moroccans, Algerians and Tunisians will remember. US policy turned out to set only the French free — free to reimpose their pre-war administration on the Maghreb. The current Reagan rhetoric about "freeing" Lebanon of foreign forces and restoring the sovereignty and independence of the Lebanese state is of a different order from Roosevelt's promises. But it shares a similar attitude toward the Arabs — a duplicity bordering on contempt and a belief that superior force is all "they" can understand.

It seems incredible that an American administration would seriously contemplate going to war in Lebanon so soon after Israel's expedition had failed to impose its political will. But observers who claim administration officials are too ignorant of Lebanon's "complexity" to make a rational decision to intervene ignore the ample evidence of administration officials' own perceptions. According to those, interventionism as a policy — in El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Libya, Sudan and Chad — has been both right and successful.

The advocates of an American mission "to set Lebanon free" with US guns were on the brink of making a mistake as colossal as General Ariel Sharon's before he launched the invasion of Lebanon last year. But the important thing is that the officials who count in this matter did not think they were. They include three Marines — General Paul X. Kelley, the current commandant of the Marine Corps, the secretary of state, George Shultz, and the president's deputy national security advisor and Middle East negotiator, Robert McFarlane. In a 1978 book on presidential decision-making in military crises, McFarlane elevated Marine tactical doctrine to a theory of global strategy and presidential gamesmanship: "Americans do not support vacillation. They expect their leaders to lead, to be clear, forthright, and firm. Particularly when American lives or property have been lost, the American impluse is toward firmness. It must not be reflexive — a knee jerk — but rather thought out and appropriate in strength to the task." In local crises, McFarlane advised, "there is a value in being even brutal...to signal the superpowers and regional adversaries about US intentions." As a message for Lebanon, Sharon could not have said it more clearly.

Iraq. During a visit to Washington from September 7 to 14, Iraq's Deputy Foreign Minister Ismat Kittani offered State Department officials and congressmen a pledge that Iraq's relations with the US would become "the best ever" if the administration would intervene to stop US-made arms flowing through US allies to Iran. Kittani also asked that the US approve third-country shipments of US weapons to Iraq and take other steps to encourage Iran to negotiate an end to the war.

On the requests to aid Iraq, the US response was noncommittal. Officials told Kittani they had done as much as they could to block the arms flow to Iran, and there was not anything they could do to persuade the Khomeini government to negotiate. However, behind Kittani's back, US officials in Paris were demanding that France withhold or at least delay the shipment of five Super-Etendard bombers France has agreed to supply Iraq. The administration also got British and German officials to put similar pressure on the French, arguing that Iraqi use of the aircraft could provoke Iranian retaliation, threatening all international shipping in the Gulf, and perhaps even closing the Strait of Hormuz. The US request was pushed all the way to President Mitterrand. He told Claude Cheysson, his foreign minister, "Don't break the contract, but stretch out to the maximum the delay in delivery."

Algeria. After the Carter administration had initiated an improvement in US–Algerian relations, the Reagan administration accepted Moroccan entreaties that it go slow on approving exports of transport aircraft and other goods that have potential military applications. The Algerian government persisted in the effort at rapprochement, and export licences were issued for the sale of two lots of Lockheed C-130 aircraft. Then in May this year, the president formally certified Algeria as eligible to receive US "defence services", a term that covers training for Algerian officers in the US and technical assistance by US military contractors in Algeria. The US move was intended to open the way for major US arms sales to Algeria.

Then in July the administration intervened directly in a dispute between a group of US congressmen and the Algerian oil and gas company, Sonatrach. The congressmen are from Midwestern states which receive Algerian gas through a contract negotiated between Sonatrach and Trunkline Liquid Natural Gas Company. The contract, worked out originally six years ago and modified several time since then, provides for much larger volumes of gas than the Midwestern states now want, at a much higher price than they need pay on the current market. When the contract was first negotiated, the deal provided the security of supply the Americans wanted at a price they thought was fair. Now they want to cancel the contract, and the congressmen have been pushing the administration to help them.

At first the administration helped the anti-Algerian forces by doing nothing to oppose them in Congress. Then in July the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission announced its intention of announcing a new policy on Algerian gas in the autumn. That is likely to undermine the Algerian contract and encourage other foreign buyers of Algerian gas to do the same thing.

The Gulf States. For more than a year several of the Arab Gulf states — Bahrein, the United Arab Emirates and Oman primarily — have been waiting on an administration decision to permit advanced military aircraft sales.

At first, administration officials, acting in league with Northrop Corporation, tried to persuade the Arabs to buy the Northrop export fighter known as the F-20 Tigershark. Bahrein was the first to agree to take four of the aircraft, but then changed its mind after publicity revealed the price was inflated, and after other Gulf states indicated they preferred the more flexible, long-range F-16 or F-15. Under pressure from the manufacturers of the F-16 and F-15, who did not want to lose orders to competing French and European aircraft, and under cross-pressure from Israel and the Israeli bloc in Congress not to allow the Gulf Arab states to have these advanced aircraft, the administration hedged amd delayed its decision.

Then in August the administration made up its mind. Advanced aircraft of the F-16 and F-15 type would be prohibited for sale to Bahrein, Kuwait, Qatar and the UAE. Saudi Arabia and Egypt, which have already received the aircraft, would continue to be eligible. Turkey, like the other NATO allies, would be eligible also. The case of Jordan, which has sought the F-16, was put off to the future.

The one Gulf state newly permitted to buy the advanced aircraft was Oman. There were several reasons for that, according to administration officials. It is so far from Israel that advanced aircraft could not reach Israeli targets. US and British officers serving in the Omani Air Force would insure against transfer of aircraft technology to other Arab states. Finally, Oman has accepted a military access and cooperation agreement allowing US troops to operate from Omani territory. That, the administration thought, deserved a reward.

Egypt. For four years the Israeli bloc in Congress has gone along with a tacit link between US financial assistance to Egypt and Israel. Now, as Israel demands continuing increases, and Egypt demands parity with Israel, the congressmen have begun a campaign to cut aid to Egypt.

Publicly, administration officials put up a diffident defence of aid levels to Egypt. At the same time, however, they have permitted severeState Department criticism of Egyptian economic policy to surface, while suppressing equally sharp criticism of Israeli economic policy. Egypt, officials have suggested, may not be able to raise enough revenues, increase its exports and meet its existing foreign debts.

On August 2, the board of the US Export-Import Bank declined to approve a loan for US construction of Egypt's first commercial nuclear reactor at ad–Dabaa. The justification, according to Bank officials, was that Exim must "stick to its legislative standard — that is, reasonable assurance of repayment." As government officials arguing against the loan suggested, Washington was saying that Egypt is a poor credit risk.

These are only a few examples of the way in which the Reagan administration deals bilaterally with the Arab states. They reveal the broader pattern, however. The administration will cultivate the Arabs for bases and arms sales. It cannot be relied on to deal even–handedly, and it cannot be counted on to preserve its contracts or keep its word.

At the outset of the administration, Richard Burt, a senior state department official, told Congress that "we must demonstrate that it pays to be an American friend." That is hardly what the administration's record shows to date. (Reprinted from Middle East International.)

AN INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON RURAL SOCIETIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST MEETS AT BIR ZEIT UNIVERSITY

An 'On-site' Conference for West Bank and Foreign Academics

by John Richardson

At a recent international conference on rural societies, Bir Zeit University was the site of discussions on women in the rural Middle East, development in agrarian communities and an examination of Israel's settlement policy. "It is important... that we become not objects of study, but contribute and benefit from it."

International academic conferences are not usually the stuff from which headlines are made. When the mundane pops up in the West Bank, however, it has a tendency to attract attention.

The International Symposium on Rural Societies in the Middle East (ISRSME) met for its second session at Bir Zeit University (BZU), October 6-8. It started with a bang. Conference would-be participant Ann Scott was detained at the airport and put on the first plane back to London. It is doubtful that the paper by demographer Scott — "Fertility in Arab Countries: Implications for Rural Development" — was the real threat to tranquility in the occupied territories.

The work of the conference itself consisted of six sessions in which 17 papers were read and closed with two films on Rashidiya refugee camp in South Lebanon before and after it was razed during the Israeli invasion, in June 1982. Sessions were held on theoretical issues in the study of agrarian societies, including aspects of rural development in Palestine and women in the rural Middle East. The academics arrived from Britain, Japan, Jordan, Holland and the US to join three Bir Zeit University teachers and an employee of the Arab Thought Forum in Jerusalem.

Unusually, the work of the symposium started outside the meeting rooms. Local experts were enlisted to take the visiting academics on tours of West Bank settlements, agricultural projects in the Jordan Valley and the Old City of Jerusalem. Most of the visitors told *Al Fajr* later that this was the high spot of their week.

The ISRSME, which pioneered this first international academic conference in the occupied territories, is just over two years old. Organiser Kathy Glavanis, who teaches social sciences at BZU, told *Al Fajr* the symposium was held initially at the Middle East Centre, Durham University, England, to try to introduce into Middle East social science debate the rigour found in other areas. She described the literature on the area as "impoverished, atheoretical and biased."

Glavanis said that at the end of the first symposium, participants decided to carry on their discussion to further explore some of the questions raised. Sociologist Salim Tamari of BZU suggested that the next discussion come here, which was accepted, and the University of Amsterdam was able to put up some cash. Since then, the triangle has been further tightened — Durham has a formal exchange programme with BZU and Amsterdam is in the process of closing an agreement.

Organisers were very aware from the outset of the added significance of holding the conference at BZU. "BZU is attacked for 'not being an academic institution,' " said Kathy Glavanis. "These links strengthen it against the authorities and have implications for the defence of the Palestinians' right to education."

Salim Tamari found other advantages. Himself an expert on rural sociology, he said it was important for the scholarly community here and people working in rural development to be exposed to the latest research on social sciences in the Middle East. "It is also very important to contact other Middle East and European universities working in the area of Middle East Studies so that we become not objects of study but contribute to and benefit from it," he said.

Most of the outsiders who flew in for the meetings agreed that critical or socialist academic work on the Middle East is sadly lacking. One British university lecturer, who asked that his name not be used, said the conference was most important because of the "self-conscious and theoretically-informed" framework in which it took place. He said that the work of BZU social scientists is "known and respected by many of us in Europe and the USA."

Discussion at the various sessions was punctuated by occasional denegrating references to 'Orientalism' — a catch-all for the subjective approaches to the study of the Arab world in Western-oriented mainstream academia. More importantly, says Kathy Glavanis, there's just so little specific literature in the field. She points out that papers delivered on the situation in Palestine exposed the fact that even basic data is not known.

Visitors were clearly impressed by their exposure to the West Bank. Robert Fernea, from the University of Texas, said at the closing session that "for those of us from outside, our contacts have transformed the West Bank as a political issue to an existential and personal experience." Nico Kielstra of the University of Amsterdam said the fact that some local people were able to attend "gave it a less academic nature." Had the second ISRSME been held at a European centre, it would have been "less urgent and less related to practical problems than here." William Harris, a New Zealander who now works at Johns Hopkins (SAIS) University in the US, was, more pragmatically, just grateful for another opportunity to visit the area where he did his PhD research on Israel's settlement policy in the occupied territories.

Kathy Glavanis reflected that the fact that people had been moved and affected by seeing the situation in the West Bank first-hand led to a high level of discussion. "It was lively and academically very useful," she said. "We had to cut discussion short at almost every session." She also points out that by holding the conference here people had to take a stand on the issues involved.

Organisers were not concerned that the occupation authorities would disrupt the conference. "The international team are just the kind of people who get protection," they reasoned.

Several questions were raised by the conference, both about the area in question: the West Bank as a site for academic gatherings, and the relevance of academia to the local community in which it finds itself.

The papers themselves reflect this dilemma. Papers by BZU pharmacologist Rita Giacaman and Arab Thought Forum researcher Alex Pellock dealt with immediate problems in health and economics in West Bank communities. Salim Tamari gave a paper on the history and development of the Village Leagues in parallel with an examination of settlements and settlement policy by William Harris. The occupied territories were also the site for a more theoretical examination of the position of women by Annelise Moors of Amsterdam and a somewhat gasconistic paper by Anya Vanderhart. Other studies, however, dealt with other areas in the region from Turkey to Saudia Arabia, or examined the theoretical underpinnings of the field.

At the closing session of the conference, the gathered intellectuals decided to continue the rural society debate at their next meeting — provisionally set for two years time. Finances may determine the central focus. Peter Coleridge of OXFAM suggested that if a development focus was chosen, agencies such as his may bankroll the conference. The present ISRSME was financed by Amsterdam, with BZU and Durham picking up incidental expenses. It cost an estimated US$6000 to stage. A widened invitation list, possibly including graduate students, could push the price up further, making agency backing almost essential.

Participants thought that one positive development could be the selection of the West Bank as a site for research. "It has the benefit of being a very small area," said one of the Americans. Some BZU staff, concerned about the lack of raw data on even basic issues, see the formation of team work on the West Bank as especially important. Salim Tamari sees the development of a cadre of skilled local researchers as a vital step forward.

Holding the ISRSME here has drawbacks. Some participants noted that outsider Arab and Iranian would-be participants were unable to attend. Others said that having any conference outside a central European location inevitably adds to the cost. The group who met in BZU, however, decided that the benefits and the excitement generated here outweigh disadvantages. It was proposed that colleagues who could not attend be asked to submit papers to be read by other people. The BZU staff were delegated to select a conference location.

While there are no plans for BZU organised academic conferences at present, there is a strong possibility that one of the preparatory sessions for the next International Sociological Association conference, due to be held in India, be held on the West Bank.

While BZU staff were delighted with the outcome of the ISRSME, some local intellectuals were not. Mohammed Batrawi, the Jerusalem Electric Company's accountant, attended some sessions after hearing about it from friends. He was angry that organisers had not publicised the sessions. "All the people here are foreigners or work at BZU," he told *Al Fajr*. "People from all sectors of our society should have been invited and I blame the organisers.

"How can they discuss the problems of women and not invite women from the Working Women's Committee to attend," he asked rhetorically. Members of organised women's groups are reportedly considering formally complaining to conference organisers that they were not asked to present papers. Others protested the fact that prominent Palestinian academics working in the field were not invited to attend.

Descent from the 'ivory tower' is never easy for academia. Bertold Hendricks of Amsterdam liked the idea of organising a popular lecture series around a future conference so that academia could meet a wider spectrum of West Bank society and put their theoretical perspective to the test of practical experience.

Kathy Glavanis spoke of attempting to organise a fortnight-long conference which would mix workshops with straight academic papers and discussion.

The delegates from outside are now back home. If past experience is anything to go by, their experience here will soon begin appearing in journals and magazines in their home countries. West Bank academics, having got through their first conference, must now plan for the future.

"UNIFIED" ELECTIONS IN A DIVIDED CITY

by Zvi Barel

At 5:00 pm the tower of Augusta Victoria Hospital takes in the last of the sunshine, an orange-reddish light without shade or variation. A stable, standing light, fit for postcards or slides. At such a pre-evening hour on Friday, everything seems to stop. Soon the poor neon lights will go on in East Jerusalem, and the 60 watt bulbs and the bluish light of television screens. The road that passes beneath Abu Tor will shine and glitter, the stagnant water that flows aimlessly beside it will reflect the lights of the few street lamps.

The water has flowed below the house of the Abu Najma family in Abu Tor for a long time. One of the attendants at the house meeting organised for the staff of Teddy Kollek explains that the pipes are old — from the "era of the *Ingleesie* (British)." Some of them were replaced, but the pipe-layers did not make good "connections," and the water runs into the street. "*Ma'alesh!*" (It's OK!).

At that moment the game starts. The Arab explains the problem, and the municipality official who attends the meeting explains what should be done. "On Tuesday, Water Department technicians will come and repair them." Both of them know that this is merely a promise, but the politeness of the host draws one or two expressions of "*Insh'Allah* " (If God wills). Orangeade is put on the table in ornamented glasses, followed by filled cakes. A discussion on youth activities develops. The municipality speaks and the hosts listen. They have already heard a lot — but youth activities are not exactly their theme. The rain waters that flow down the slopes in winter bother them more. "It soaks your trousers, it's impossible to pass in the street." The solution — to build a wall that would divert the water — costs money. The municipality does not have enough. The inhabitants do not want to participate. Never mind. For another year trousers will get wet.

In such a pre-election season, activists do not speak of sums and budgets. If they say they are investing a lot, they will be considered Arab-lovers, PLO-supporters and neglecters of Jewish quarters. And if they say they are not paying much, they will be told they are ignoring the development of East Jerusalem.

However, the budgets are not the main thing. It is possible to live without a sidewalk, but it is hard to live without a passport. It is possible to live without a beautiful garden, but it is impossible to live without the relatives from Jordan who did not come to the wedding because of the delays in granting permits. What is being promised in the Jerusalem of the Israelis does not include the Jerusalem of the Arabs, and what is promised in the Jerusalem of the Arabs angers the Jerusalem of the Israelis. Here, in Arab Abu Tor, it is permitted to tell the inhabitants that anyone who does not vote gives a double voice to Ariel Sharon, who supports the Likud candidate for mayor Tussia-Cohen. In order to frighten them, it is permitted to use Sharon's name — no further interpretation is needed.

The system of "who frightens more" works in the Arab town. Teddy Kollek is well-known from 1967. From their point of view he is Israeli like all Israelis and "loves" Arabs like they all do. In their opinion if he could get rid of the 130,000 "Orientals" who destroy the demographic balance, he would not hesitate. Indeed, the municipality encourages emigration of the population from the municipal area to the other side of the annexation line. They give construction loans in quarters outside of Jerusalem and try to provide better services there, but the movement is not great. Only a few thousand have left. In spite of the abundance in housing that awaits them, they prefer Kollek's domination to that of the military government. The Israeli Kollek is less frightening than the military government Israelis.

After 16 years of urban occupation, the inhabitants know all the offices — know whom they must turn to in order to get a permit for a shop or to lobby for a son to be freed from prison. Here there are no officers, and shops are not opened by force when there are strikes. This mayor is prepared to shout at yeshiva students who invade Arab houses. "This makes us much better off than 10 kilometres of pavement would.

Kollek-for-mayor posters in East Jerusalem: "There is only discussion with the Arabs because there is no solution."

We know, however, that he is the one who permits them to live among us." The Arab press also makes comparisons. Not comparisons of water, sewage, electricity or street-cleaning. This is not interesting; these are only municipal matters. The comparison is between Teddy Kollek and his competitors; it is political and relates to the heart of the "divided urban unity." *Al Awda* magazine, which expresses the views of Fatah in the PLO, ran the following piece: "If the Likud wins, and Yehoshua Matza and Gershon Salomon and all the extreme caucuses are in the municipal council, the situation of the Arab inhabitants in the town will worsen further. So, for instance, the construction permits will be blocked, more lands will be confiscated for "public purposes" and the Jerusalem ID card will be taken away from those who are dwelling outside the urban area. But more than that, there will be increased attempts to build a synagogue in the *Haram al-Sharif*."

And this is the concern. A vote for Kollek means continued existence of the *Haram al-Sharif*; a vote for Tussia-Cohen means it will be turned into *Har HaBayit*. This is also the first issue when making comparisons between the two Israelis who want to manage the town. The broken water pipe in Abu Tor may still wait a long time. It is not crucial. It perhaps is last on the list of comparisons.

Because between *Har HaBayit* and the pipe, there are thousands of details you need to know in order to live in a unified town: people should know to cross Jaffa Street (the main West Jerusalem thoroughfare) before the policewoman catches them to check their documents in public; they should know to lower their eyes in front of a border policeman; know what to write in the Arabic newspaper in order that it is not closed all of a sudden; know what to say to whom in order to get a housing loan from the municipality; and what to say to whom in order to get the *samoud* (steadfastness) funds from the Jordanians, and at the same time not be exposed to the nationalists; to pass through the yeshivas in the Muslim quarter in groups; and to leave prayers at al-Aqsa one at a time. To come to the mayor's receptions and to shake the hands of the important Israelis for an exact period of time so that you will not be suspected of too much loving or too little politeness; to engrave deep in one's heart the Arabic names of the new quarters but to tell the bus driver their names in Hebrew; and to hope that a son or daughter may be able to study at the Hebrew University but to know that the result will be a garage or the Tnuva store.

On an open veranda of the Abu Najma family, at the house-meeting for Teddy, on the low metal stools, they do not speak about all this. This is background material well-known to both sides. There is no discussion about this with the Israelis, so they don't get angry, and there is discussion with the Arabs because there is no solution. But there must be discussion.

Sixty thousand rights to vote should not be ignored so easily. And here too the inhabitants make comparisons between the "advocate" of the East Jerusalem Electricity Company (Tussia-Cohen is JEC's lawyer) and the "advocate" of the inhabitants of Khaldiyeh Street, who suffer from those who carry arms from the neighbouring yeshiva; between "the government" of Kollek that stops demolition orders and the government that would stand behind Tussia-Cohen to claim more demolition orders, and for another Jewish quarter. The water pipes, the sidewalks and the pavement of playgrounds will cause their submission.

If in *Mahaneh Yehudah* (the staunchly pro-Likud West Jerusalem market area) Kollek equals Peres, in the east city Tussia-Cohen equals Sharon. A good slogan in *Mahaneh Yehuda* shakes the hearts in Abu Tor. After an hour the tower of Augusta Victoria turns grey. The house meeting has ended. Hands are shaken one-by-one, and the glasses are collected. A few heads asking for last favours from the responsible people are stuck through the windows of starting cars — the release of a son from detention, the finalising of a visiting permit, or a job. Each side knows the other by their first names. Everybody knows everybody. This one knows how to ask, and that one knows how to answer. The rules of the game have been fixed for 16 years already. It is possible for it to continue with the same players. What is set is set. (Translation: HaAretz, October 11, 1983).

ARROUB CAMP: A TINY ARGENTINA

by Zvi Barel

Sealed entrance to Arroub camp / ID

Response A: "The Israeli army does not know about an incident in which Israeli reserve soldiers entered the Palestinian refugee camp al-Arroub and beat residents. It is correct that in the framework of security activities arrests were made, legally and in accordance with the regulations, at al-Arroub camp, following a stone-throwing incident at Israeli cars on the main road."

Response B: "The police is not aware that adults from al-Arroub were arrested, and no complaint of the beating of adults by soldiers or policemen was registered with the police."

Response C: "The Israeli army has instructed that the arrestees from al-Arroub be released because there was no incriminating testimony against them."

Response D: "The police released the detainees and passed the file to the legal advisor for a decision."

On Sunday September 18, at 7:30 pm, a number of stones were thrown from the al-Arroub refugee camp at an Egged bus travelling from Jerusalem to Kiryat Arba. This despite the fact that the camp entrance has been sealed with a thick concrete wall and despite the forced reconciliation (*sulha*) which was made with the local council of Kiryat Arba 10 months ago; these did not help.

The stones, as mentioned above, continue to be thrown. Nobody was injured in the "attack", but an hour after the stone-throwing incident was reported, an Israeli force arrived at the camp and arrested (whoever came at hand) some young adults. The representative of the military government went to the house of the *mukhtar* and notified him of the arrests. But the issue did not end there.

Later the same night — more accurately at around 1:30 am — more Israeli forces came to the camp. They were the soldiers of the "Judea Unit" who serve in security and patrol roles in the Hebron area. This unit was recruited three weeks ago and was scheduled to complete its service two or three days after the incident. Among the soldiers there were known people, such as the brothers Shalom and Shimon Yitzhak, Zev Friedman and Tzvika Katzover, all of them from Kiryat Arba. The first citizen of Kiryat Arba settlement, head of the local council Shalom Vakh, joined them. He was not on duty at that time, and no explanation has yet been given for his appearance that night in al-Arroub camp.

This group had information provided them by an Arab resident of the camp, according to military sources, which included the names of the "real" stone throwers. The group of soldiers headed by Mr Vakh returned to the house of the *mukhtar*, and through him they located the houses of throwers. In order to give the title "Arrested in Accordance with the Law" to the story, the soldiers brought two policemen along to make the arrests legal.

"They ordered me out of bed at 1:30 am, covered my head with a *kafiyya* and tied my hands behind my back. I did not see anything. Then they shouted at me, 'Get into the car.' I told them, 'I don't see the car.' Then they beat me on the back, the neck, the head and the stomach and cursed me and my family.

"Finally I succeeded in getting into the car. All the way from al-Arroub to the military government building, and the jeep was travelling slowly, they beat me on all parts of the body. Finally when we arrived at the military government compound, they removed the *kafiyya* from our eyes and gave each of the four of us a cigarette and told us not tell anybody about the beatings.

"When they removed the cover from my face, I looked at the soldiers and among them I recognised some Kiryat Arba settlers. One of them is the driver of the number 60 bus which runs on the Jerusalem-Kiryat Arba road. I know these people because I work as a cleaner in Kiryat Arba.

"The investigation was an issue in itself. At the beginning the policemen beat me. After the beatings and the curses, they told me that I was accused of throwing stones at a bus. They ordered me to sign acknowledgement of the charge and then they demanded I tell them my story. I told the investigator what I had done during that day. He wrote everything in Hebrew and finally I signed the testimony. I do not know if he wrote all that I said because I do not read Hebrew. Maybe he wrote something against me, how do I know?"

"*Why did you not file a complaint about the conduct of the soldiers?*"

"Are you crazy? They would find a pretext to arrest me or to beat me or to come again to our house at night."

"*Can you identify the soldiers who beat you?*"

"I know a number of people from Kiryat Arba through my work there. I saw the policemen with my own eyes and I am ready to testify that they beat me. I don't mind your writing my name — Majdi Abdullah Titi — and let them come and take my testimony about the beating."

This is not the only story of Majdi Titi. On the same night, Ahmad Mahmoud Hossni, Ribhi Abdallah Mahmoud and Jaber Ali Titi were also arrested. All of them were in the jeep of "Judean Unit" soldiers and all of them were beaten and interrogated in the same way. One of them was kept for the four days of the *al-Adha* feast in al-Fara'a detention centre to "spend time."

In fact, this is a story which occurs almost every day or night. But the "exciting" point in this story is the response of the security forces. I heard them over two days — from different representatives of the police and the Israeli Army. They gave me the feeling that thick threads connect Israeli rule in the West Bank and Gaza Strip with what is happening in Argentina. It was only a senior police source who agreed to tell me that the arrestees were released because "they received what they deserved."

It is worth mentioning that these phenomena are still taking place even after the new chief of staff and the military prosecutor issued new orders regarding arresting people and the ways of "handling" them.

It comes out, apparently, that written orders are designed for self-adornment, but the routine and the habit are stronger than any order. (Translation: HaAretz, September 23, 1983).

IN FRONT OF A SHOOTING SQUAD

by Zvi Barel

A little before Nabatiya township, a convoy of trucks loaded with soldiers passes. They are sitting alert, their faces looking out and their weapons cocked. Suddenly there are many shots from the truck. We stop at once, not understanding why the soldiers are shooting into an open field. The truck halts, and the soldiers quickly pour out, throwing themselves on the ground, making a firing line.

From the rise in the field, a young Arab jumps out screaming inhumanly and swinging his hands upwards. He takes off his T-shirt hysterically to show the soldiers he has no weapons. He waves his shirt over his head like a flag, shouting at them not to shoot.

The performance looks like a dreadful picture of execution. A line of soldiers stands ready to pull the trigger if the lad dares to make an incorrect move. A few seconds later a group of women burst from a nearby house. They run in front of the rifle barrels, trying to stop the potential shots by interposing their bodies. Then somebody calls the lad to come closer. He puts his hands down and steps towards us. It is made clear that he was hunting birds for pleasure in the courtyard. The soldiers in the truck saw somebody with a gun, heard a shot and therefore responded. Quickly a big group of shaking neighbours gather. The women, turning away from the soldiers getting back on the truck and contining their journey, fall on the lad with kisses and hysterical screaming. The local police representative also arrives and explains that the lad only arrived yesterday from Beirut to have a rest in his village.

Indeed, Lebanon bears dreadful irony. A boy runs away from shelled Beirut, from street battles and booby-trapped cars, in order to rest and hunt birds in his house's courtyard, and here in the south he finds himself in front of a firing squad.

Indeed, life in the Lebanese region under Israeli army domination is managed nowadays in the gaps between the various forces that are active in the field. In the Sidon gendarmerie office the picture was made even more clear. A senior gendarmerie officer in ironed clothes and with a dull face tries to explain to us that basically the police does its job independently.

"Would you arrest a Phalangist committing a civil offence," I ask. "No," he says, "we cannot do anything against an armed man."

"And against a Haddad supporter?"

"Also not."

"And what about a Shi'ite?"

"Not at all." Then what remains? To this of course he has no answer. He will continue to get his salary, will continue to represent the central authority that does not exist, will guard his life and the lives of other police officers.

From the brief and rough statements of the police officer, you learn that he indeed does not care that Shi'ites are killing Christians who are killing Palestinians. "When a settling of accounts is taking place, we do not interfere," he says. "Of course, it would be better if the Israeli army would leave and the central authority would dominate the south too. Then we could do our job 100 percent."

In the meantime, the traffic in the street continues to flow as if out of an inner impulse. The dozens of cars, bearing an odd mixture of plates and lacking lamps and other parts, press themselves together in the rush. Nobody is prepared to prophesy what will happen tomorrow. Nobody is prepared to offer solutions. You have passed another day in peace, you have lived another 24 hours, you have hunted birds and were not shot by tense soldiers — this is also something. You have proved that "life is stronger than you and me."

And in all this set up of torn pieces the Israeli Army is settled. "To say that South Lebanon is the northern region of Israel is mere rattling," a senior officer tells me. "Distinguished from the West Bank, here we don't have any ideological claims. Here the philosophy is different." He explains that the Israeli army makes efforts to let the population manage life by themselves through the Lebanese institutions. "We interfere only when the local authorities have no success in solving problems. Then we are prepared to aid, to give advice, to make the suitable ties and even to solve a problem here or there."

However, it comes out that there already is an occupation dynamic. It is indeed not established yet as in the West Bank, but municipalities are obliged to coordinate big projects with the army, while merchants resort to special permits from the army to import their goods. And the permits are given after security and political examinations. Travellers who wish to arrive by ship at Sidon need Israeli permission in advance (recently, the issuing of such permission was dropped and thousands of refugees who are waiting in Cyprus to return home could not do so).

"Coordinating actions" between the army and the local legal system enables collaborators to avoid trial and permits the arrest without trial of suspected people, even in the middle of a legal process. Weapons are distributed to some collaborators for self-defence. It is true that all these steps have security or humanitarian explanations that might be acceptable or understandable, and at this point Israel is only holding the Lebanese population between the thumb and the forefinger. However, the fear is that since the dynamics have started, it might become a real occupation no different from what is happening on the (West) Bank. (Translation: HaAretz, October 2, 1983).

EDWARD SAID ADDRESSES THE UN CONFERENCE ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

"Divided by Geography, United in National Identity and Destiny"

Edward W. Said is a member of the Palestine National Council, the North American Palestine Congress and Professor of English at Columbia University, New York, USA. He has written extensively on the question of Palestine and the Western perception of the Arabs. Below are excerpts from Said's statement to the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, Geneva, August 29 – September 7, 1983.

For most of the twentieth century, Palestine has been the focus of an extraordinary amount of debate, conflict, historical change and human suffering. As a geographical place, Palestine is of course saturated with cultural and religious significance. It has special importance for the three monotheistic religions; in the West, Palestine and Jerusalem, its capital city, have long been considered central to human experience, as the Crusades and the whole modern history of colonial competition in the Orient attest; in most of the non-European, post-colonial world Palestine is symbolic of heroic struggle, sacrifice and tragedy; for Jews, Palestine is now Israel, a place where biblical prophecies are fulfilled and where an independent national and sovereign state for and by Jews is now in existence; between Israel and the United States of America a "special relationship", unusual in its kind, was developed, with the result that the United States is now directly involved in the region; finally, and most crucially, Palestine has been the site of unremitting antagonism between its native, mostly Muslim and Christian inhabitants and, since the 1880s, an incoming population of Jews determined to settle and create a new Jewish state. As such then Palestine has drawn to itself not only the dynamics of Arab nationalism and Zionism, but also a complex web of other forces, from anti-colonial resistance to national renaissance, from liberal vision to religious fundamentalism.

Today, only one group of people, members of the Arab community, refer to themselves as Palestinians, and to their homeland as Palestine.

Today, the Palestinian people constitute a dispersed and dispossessed nation comprising no less than three major groups, all of them existing in forms of life that are a direct result of the destruction of Palestinian society in 1948. First there is the group of 650,000 Palestinians who are Israeli citizens, and who have been characterised as the victims of internal colonialism; second, the 1.3 million Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza who since 1967 have lived under an Israeli military occupation whose designs, apart from a stated policy of collective punishment, also include the obliteration of Palestinian national institutions and their replacement with an apparatus of quislings and mercenary collaborators; third, the Palestinians in exile, originally a group numbering upwards of 800,000 driven out by the Israelis in 1948, and now numbering about 2.1 million, who live principally in the Arab world, but who are also scattered throughout Europe, North and South America, Africa, Asia and Australia.

Divided by geography and the widely divergent circumstances of the policies ruling their lives, the Palestinians are nevertheless united in their increasingly powerful sense of national identity and destiny. From the ruins of Palestine they have emerged as a world and regional force of considerable dimensions, at the very moment that their collective existence – despite its many accomplishments and achievements – is more imperiled and more threatened than ever before . . .

. . . The opposition between Zionism as embodied by Israeli policy and the Palestinian world view as embodied in Palestine National Council resolutions since 1974 is fundamental and clear-cut. On the one hand, Israeli policy is based on an exclusionist, even paranoid vision of reality in which Jews and non-Jews are separated in all things, great and small. On the other hand, the Palestinians more than any other national group in the Middle East, have struggled to put forward a vision based on the coexistence of equal national communities in which no community can dominate another simply on the basis of race, religion, or creed. It is precisely this effort, and not its success or failure, that has been spurned and rejected totally by official Israel as a matter of principle.

Let me be very concrete. The turbulent map of today's Middle East is essentially but not exclusively the result of the presence there of Israel, which – it is estimated by a 1983 official US government study (General Accounting Office) – has been the beneficiary of well over US$20 billion in US aid. Israel has been an enormously disruptive presence, with millions of human lives skewed and distorted beyond redemption simply because its aggressiveness, its ruthlessly used power, its heedless contempt for its surroundings have been imposed, with the help of the US, on the region.

Unlimited support of Israel has committed the US to Israeli policies that are unique, not only because they are so detailed and fundamentally consistent, but also because they are still unknown to much of the world, including the supporters of Israel. For whereas it is acceptable to speak with revulsion about South African apartheid as a system of discrimination between the dominant minority whites and suppressed majority blacks, it is still virtually impossible to say anything very critical about Zionism which, so far as the Palestinians falling inside Israeli rule are concerned (they are known juridicially only as non-Jews), is in its own way equally discriminatory.

Certainly Zionism as an ideology is not monolithic, and certainly it must be said that a great many Israeli and non-Israeli Jews, Zionists and anti-Zionists, have been forthright in their criticism of Israeli policy. But in the main, it is true that as it has come to bear upon the daily lives of Palestinians today, Zionism furnished the world view – Jewish exclusionism – that is used by Israel to justify its policies ideologically and philosophically. Thus, for example, whereas any Jew anywhere can claim citizenship in Israel according to the Law of Return, people born in Palestine, but non-Jewish, have no such right. Non-Jews cannot enjoy full rights in Israel, a state which is not the state of its citizens, but the state of the Jewish people, wherever Jews may be . . .

. . . Ninety-five percent of the land of Israel is held in perpetuity for the Jewish people, which thus means that once declared absentees or illegally in possession of "Jewish" land, Palestinians are stripped of their land and consequently lose any rights to own land.

Many states reveal the extent to which legal techniques have been employed – brilliantly in most cases – to perpetuate the enforced distinction between Jews and non-Jews in the Jewish state (i.e. the Jewish National Fund, the land and water authority, etc.). In all cases of course these distinctions are backed up by armed might . . .

. . . Force and a desperate minority sense of the world: these characterise official Israeli attitudes to the world. Unfortunately, they are infectious and easily communicable to the surrounding region, so that when, for example, Oded Yinon proclaims one of the goals of Israeli strategy in the 1980s to be the breakup of Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Egypt into new mini-ethnic and confessional entities, his ideas correspond to a wave of such minority secessionist sentiments in the Arab world. Surely Lebanon is a case in point, as are other states. Then too the national security idea of Israel – its militarism, its justification of the cruelest and most unjust state practices against individuals in the name of national security – has, alas, bred similar reactive tendencies in Arab states. I speak here both as an Arab and as a member of a Christian Arab minority: the picture is an appalling one, and, while I am not sparing in criticism of Israel and Zionism, I can be no less exigent in my criticism of the Arab and Christian derivative equivalents of Zionism . . .

. . . The Palestinian people today are faced with nothing less than ethnocide, and perhaps for the first time in history of nations the rest of the world is able, quite literally, to watch the process in all its horrible detail. Ignorance is no longer an excuse. With the United States and many other nations, Israel has determined to reduce the Palestinians to a people without a narratable history, without a national institutional identity, without effective political presence. Hence Palestinian archives are either despoiled or stolen and, what is more insidious, Palestinian history is re-written so as to remove the strong nationalist factor from it entirely: Palestinians are "Arab" dwellers in Eretz Israel, inhabitants of Judea and Samaria, etc. In turn, policy is based on this view of history, the better to be able to disperse Palestinians, to grind them down further into actors indistinguishable from their surroundings. Various countries have made no secret of their desire to transport Palestinians elsewhere, to reduce their number, and more crucially, to prevent concentrations of Palestinians from ever coming about. So we note the existence not only of detention centres like Ansar (a virtual concentration camp), but also of settlement policies in the occupied territories,, where Arab centres of population are both separated and enclosed by a grid of Jewish settlements. The essence of all this is to prevent Palestinian life from ever having continuity and integrity . . .

. . . Here therefore, the production of concrete information becomes the first imperative of this conference, and what could be more concrete than for the UN to set about counting the Palestinians. To this day, in whatever country they live, Palestinians are known by the government of the country as Palestinians, yet no official figures are acknowledged or revealed. I wish to say in public here, in front of this assembly of delegates from a majority of UN member states, that the absence you witness of the exact aggregate number of officially counted Palestinians is a symptomatic and profoundly significant absence, by no means a mere oversight or accident.

It is worth remembering the history of efforts to count the Palestinians; the failures of these efforts attest to the collective governmental will *not* to acknowledge the Palestinians as possessing exact bodies, places of birth and residence, genders and other demographic data.

Could it be that there exists a common worry about counting Palestinians for fear that once demographically identified, the Palestinians would then be acknowledged as having a national existence of their own? . . .

. . . Demographic projections have been done, but no permission for enumeration was given the UN by the states concerned.

That is where things stand today. Everything in this world, as we know, is political to a greater or lesser degree. With the Palestinian people struggling valiantly against all odds and on all fronts, it behooves us to recognise the fact than any position taken or not taken about the question of Palestine is a political act, any action taken or not taken in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle is also a political act. As a Palestinian, and speaking entirely as an individual, I must register here my profound distaste for those Western and other states who, while proclaiming their sympathy and concern, go out of their way, whether by means of ambiguity or of outright hostility, to undermine all UN efforts to undertake serious international work on the Palestinians' behalf. These are politicial actions on the lowest level. But the UN, and this conference in particular, has a higher calling, and in addition to its mission, it has moral rights, obligations, indeed. Of these the passing of resolutions is naturally one, but the passing of resolutions with some built-in mechanism for implementation is also one. We will not resolve or settle the question of Palestine here. But we can take the essential beginning step by trying, for the first time in modern history, to make a concrete and accurate count of who, where and how many the Palestinians are, in order thereafter that their political voice be heard and their representative's representativity be universally accepted . . .

PALESTINE AND LITERATURE

Ali al-Khalili

Al Fajr al-Adabi, the Palestinian cultural magazine, was issued this month with a nice, new cover and containing as usual literary articles, poems and short stories. Ali al-Khalili's feature poem, *As If It Is Naught*, laments the deteriorating conditions in the Arab world and the occupied territories. Everything the poet sees has been dissolved into ruins, the earth has vanished and the Arab towns Beirut, Amman, Baghdad, Wahran, no longer exist. The bad times are everywhere and every time:

It extends from the time of satire
to the time of lament
of appeal
to the garbaged moon
and chains
in large courtyards

The poem implies a theme of exile and successive expulsions for the Palestinians and hints about the increase of settlements in the occupied lands. However, the poet does not reach the stalemate point of despair.

Al Fajr al-Adabi

AS IF IT IS NAUGHT BY ALI AL-KHALILI

Oh, ancient cell
like festive wine yet no feast
the slave's sadness
in the remnant of intoxication
in the remnant of song
whenever he closes his eyes
he releases a gesture
whenever he wakes up
he wipes out a gesture
whenever . . .
Oh, mellow one . . .
be an optimist
be an optimist
the wave collides with another
at every shore
and rests.

From the heart of every weak one,
a lily blossoms
a gallows collapses on someone's shoulder
be an optimist, optimist
we die and do not die
once or twice
thus, and he who wears temptation
will undress
nude, he collapses
nude, he escapes . . . nude
a drop of blood slaps him twice
like anybody who stands up and collapses
like a fireplace from which the dew eats ashes
and dew
it inhabits houses
Thus. The sea is not a whale
said the birds
and said nothing more
Oh . . .
childhood is ruins
old age is ruins
doves are ruins
the banners are ruins
dreams
feet
wombs
be an optimist
be an optimist

Downward spirals of oppression, war and conspiracy
engulfing also people
people are equal in death like empty gun cartridges,
missile launchers, military coffins plunging
into well-respected cemeteries and
the country has been drowned in old and new massacres
and the Palestinian people emerge from every atlas
no geographic place, not one metre to step on
no window in summer, and no small homeland for the vagabond people
the downward spirals of tears are sad, sad
the tears become a siege
these are the dead's shoes
not rotten, not dragged to ants' holes
they are the music of the rotten corpses
silence then
save the cry for the last shot
*soundless in the last pistol which killed Khalil Hawi **
who is obsessed with the fallen men and women
and the sores of the same nation
these are the herds of the most civilised and enlightened
nations . . . coming
to cultivate the corpses, the bananas of Jericho,
the apples of Haifa, the Dead Sea salts, the
Lebanon cedars, the pomegranates of Syria, the olive of
Jerusalem, the archaeological remains of Arab,
Islamic, Roman, Aramaic, Canaanite, tribal confessional
nuclear wars . . . wait for more
count on wooden ploughs
despite bulldozers,
tractors and Arian settlements
the names of Aad and Thamoud tribes
sons of Ghassan and Hassan
sons of Canaan and Adnan
sons of Ishaq and Isma'il
sons of so and so
*until the House * * being built*
falls down, down

My mistress, do not look through windows
they will not pass with toppled hollow heads
and their conversations made of hollow wood
My mistress, do not eat sweets
I heard that . . . I heard that . . . I heard . . .
My mistress, you should be an optimist
my mistress!
after one year, you will not lament
you will not set fire to the lily, the mint in my stove
you will not decorate my table
with the meal of angels and saints
with the meal of traitors
after a year
we will sit together around a mass grave
we can drink to our status quo for the church bell tower
for the minaret
we can, my mistress, talk about Sabra and Shatila

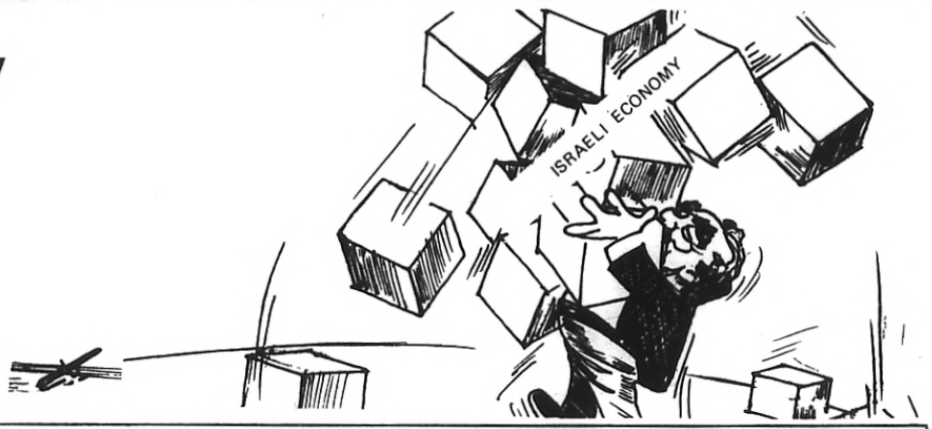
after one year
perhaps
names and the dates of massacres are mixed, confused
the positions are confused
the camps are confused
everything is already ready
everything . . .

Oh Majed!
Oh Hamed!
Oh Khaled!
as if it is the end of the world
as if it is naught
be an optimist.

* Khalil Hawi is a Lebanese poet who killed himself two weeks after the Israeli invasion. Hawi wanted to protest against the inaction of Arab regimes.

* * Ka'aba in Mecca.

WINDOW ON THE ARAB PRESS



The sudden 23 percent devaluation of the Israeli shekel and the 50 percent rise in prices for basic food items brought sharp and critical reactions from the Palestinian press in the occupied territories. The question of whether the long-awaited Lebanese reconciliation conference will or will not take place continued to occupy front pages, however.

The papers also gave a lot of space to the tensions inside Fatah and the Arab and international ramifications of the conflict. The joint PFLP and DFLP programme for reforms within the PLO and the decisions of Fatah's central committee meeting captured top spots on the front pages of all the Palestinian newspapers published locally.

The Dispute Will End

Those opposed to the Palestinian people's right for self-determination never stop trying to weaken the morale of our people and their confidence in their Arab and international friends. They are trying to take advantage of the conflict within Fatah and with Syria to keep the Palestinians away from their main concern – their national rights.

They also tried to put equal blame on the Soviet Union, which supplies the Arab countries with the most sophisticated weapons to defend themselves, and the United States, which supports and finances Israel's settlement policies. These parties do this in order to get closer to Washington, though Egypt's Hosni Mubarak realised he could not achieve anything through Camp David.

These parties will not be successful in their efforts. History will prove that they are wrong. The disputes will be resolved and this people will still be able to decide its future.

AL TALIA
October 13

Confidence and Optimism

With all the trouble our people in the occupied land have been subjected to, we still feel optimism and confidence in the unity of the PLO and its ability to represent all our people everywhere.

This confidence is the result of our total knowledge of the situation. The more we feel the difficulties, the more we should unite behind the PLO and the leadership of Yasir Arafat.

This national unity was clear the day before yesterday when Arafat received letters of support from the general secretaries of the second and third largest of the PLO groups, the Popular Front and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. This concern shows interest in protecting Palestinian national rights and what the movement has already accomplished.

If some more defeatist forces try to shake our faith in our leadership, we in the occupied territories are able to defeat their voices. This confidence in our leadership, our national institutions and our ability to learn from experience is what makes us able to remain optimistic.

Some of the Arab regimes, including Assad's, when they realise this fact, will find no way out but to align themselves with the PLO and Palestinian independence. Otherwise, these regimes will find themselves isolated.

AL FAJR
October 14

The Israeli Dollar

Three years ago the Begin government changed its currency from the lira to the shekel under the pretext of return to historical Judaism. The Israelis were pleased.

Three years later, the shekel has reached an unenvious position. It is actually waiting for someone to kill it in mercy. Finance Minister Aridor tried that when he was going to link it to the US dollar.

This problem does not need any more complications. The economic crisis over the past 35 years cannot be mended anymore. To change the currency with another is not going to help.

Therefore it is now time for this state to become part of the United States. This new situation suggested by the new–old government will be well received by the United States which is seeking to hegemonise all satellite states.

The US also wants its dollar to remain the strongest in the world so that everyone will be economically, politically and militarily dependent on it.

If introducing the shekel prevented popular outcry for three years, the American dollar, or more accurately the Israeli dollar, will not end the economic crisis. The problem needs to be tackled from the roots.

AL MITHAQ
October 15

Reagan... every two months

Thirteen months after he launched his Middle East peace initiative, US President Ronald Reagan announced that it still holds. This is not surprising. Since he introduced his initiative, Reagan has made it a habit to announce every two months that it is still alive even though the Israeli government rejected it and even refused to discuss it. The Arabs, on the other hand, consider it lacks essential elements. Some Arabs said it contains positive elements.

We would like to point out here that the US should direct its initiative to Israel which rejected it and continued erecting settlements in the occupied territories in an attempt to create a new reality that would complicate any future peace talks. President Reagan should state clearly his position on Israeli settlements in the occupied territories. The key to the start of peace negotiations is stopping settlement building and putting emphasis on the illegality of existing settlements.

Declaring every two months that his initiative still holds will not speed up the peace process in any way.

Ignoring legitimate Palestinian rights and closing eyes to Israel's political and economic policies in the occupied territories will only frustrate the peace process, kill any hope for stability in the Middle East and increase chances for more fighting. All this will lead to more international tension.

AL QUDS
October 16

Shamir follows Begin

Monday was the first day of the winter Knesset sessions. Even though the Likud, Alignment and Tehiya parties tried to cover up the crisis facing the government by leading a hysterical attack on the Soviet Union, the reality of the situation remains.

The Soviet people, including Jews, are well and free. Here in Israel the Arabs and workers are not free. There is no guaranteed freedom in Israel except the "freedom" of local and foreign capitalists in sucking the workers' blood, turning it into green dollars in local and overseas banks.

Once again, the Front introduced in the Knesset the real problems facing the people, like food, employment, peace and the future. The Front tabled a motion of no-confidence in the government because Shamir's cabinet is a continuation of its predecessor that will lead this region into disaster.

The Shamir government, which was born very weak, started by losing its ministers when Finance Minister Yoram Aridor resigned. No matter who is appointed after him, the crisis will continue.

The Democratic Front for Peace and Equality represented the people's interests when it tabled the no-confidence motion. Let the workers intensify their struggle against the government and its policies, with Sunday's strike as the beginning of this struggle. Anti-Likud parties should grow to bring the government down.

AL ITTIHAD
October 18

Mohammed and Farhan are correcting our information

Someone called Mohammed Tariq al-Khadra who lives in Syria decided Monday to cancel the existence of the Palestinian people and appoint himself a representative of the Palestinian people. So he went to the Syrian television station and declared that Yasir Arafat only represents himself and that the Palestinian people do not recognise him anymore. But this was not all. This person went further to accuse Arafat of agreeing with the American-Zionist plan during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and said that Yasir Arafat has been relieved of his duties as chairman of the PLO.

We used to believe there is a National Council, a Central Council and an Executive Committee within the PLO until al-Khadra told us on Syrian TV that we are wrong and he has all the authority of the PLO. But it seems al-Khadra has competitors.

Another has appeared in Damascus, called Farhan Abu al-Hayja, to declare his opposition to Arafat's authority and to accuse him of being an instrument in the hands of the enemies of the Palestinian revolution and a servant for the reactionary American-Israeli plot in this region.

We pity these two men. We pity anyone who tries to insult the intelligence of the Palestinian people and tries to rewrite history. Those who direct al-Khadra and Abu al-Hayja are trying to cover up their cowardliness and impotence of a year ago in Lebanon. They want us to stop thinking and forget our martyrs.

But we declare that feelings of pity can be transformed into real anger. We want to add that all Palestinians in this crucial period have to stand behind Palestinian legitimacy because the alternative would mean total loss under the boots of Arab regimes.

We inform those who want to murder the will, dreams, history and future of our people that they are dreaming. The Palestinian dream still shines and will burn, no matter who attempts to destroy it.

AL SHA'AB
October 19

Non-violence Seminar Sparks Controversy

An attempt to popularise the strategy of non-violence in Palestinian political struggle in the West Bank met with immediate protest and suspicion following a series of controversial pre-conference statements atributed to the organisers.

Mubarak Awad, a Palestinian-American who directs a juvenile counselling programme in Akron, Ohio, in the US, organised a three-day workshop in Jerusalem and Ramallah, October 13-15, to promulgate his belief in non-violent resistance "to accomplish," he said, "what armed struggle has failed to do." The seminars, which were well advertised in the Arabic dailies, drew between 30 and 200 people, including a group of Israeli journalists.

The seminar programme included lectures on the meaning of non-violence, international non-violent struggles, and non-violence in the Palestinian struggle. Lectures were followed by discussions which centred on the applicability of an organised non-violent struggle under occupation.

The atmosphere was cool from the beginning, with much of the audience angry with the statements in the Israeli press.

Yediot Aharanot, September 28, quoted Awad as saying, "Israel must destroy the refugee camps and rehabilitate the refugees from a humanitarian viewpoint. Care must be taken to pay them compensation and help them rehabilitate themselves, socially and economically." Commenting on the statement to *Al Fajr*, October 18, he said he believes refugees should be allowed to return to their homes because they are theirs. He said those who do not want, or cannot, return to their homes should be compensated for their losses.

A short item in *The Jerusalem Post*, October 13, stated that " one Palestinian source"... "hoped that the seminar could give rise to a Palestinian movement similar to Peace Now." Statements like this have been made in the past by Village League members, an East Jerusalem journalist noted, commenting on the controversy.

Awad, who describes his approach to non-violence as pragmatic and personal, insisted at the seminar that it was not his intention to replace the PLO's political work, as had been alleged by Israeli press reports. He told attendees that the PLO's political struggle outside Palestine, coupled with non-violent resistance in the occupied territories, could achieve liberation and freedom for the Palestinian people.

Awad's announcement at the first session that attending the meeting was "a political act" caused the walk-out of the Mennonite Central Committee's Jerusalem office director, Harold Dick, who said later that he had been given the impression it was not to be a political meeting and that he left because his office is not involved in local politics.

A lively discussion ensued between organisers and attendees on whether the purpose of the meeting was to set up a movement to replace the PLO and on the efficacy of non-violence.

A non-violent workshop met a number of logistical problems. The scheduled place of the seminar at the YWCA in East Jerusalem was suddenly unavailable the second and third days of the seminar. Doris Salah, the YWCA director, told *Al Fajr* that the hall was double booked. Participants were bussed to the Friends Girls School in Ramallah for the second day's workshop.

Awad explained that the school was the only place he could think of that had allowed different groups to use their halls. The last minute confusion reduced the turnout for the next two days to around 30. The Israeli authorities barred a local company from bussing seminar attendees without a permit. Local papers' coverage of the seminar was also restricted. No organisation emerged from the sessions, one participant said. Another said the feeling of the attendees was of "interest in more discussion of the subject."

The controversy continued after the conference ended. A *Jerusalem Post* report, October 16, that "the idea (of non-violent struggle) is being actively supported and encouraged" by the Quakers and the Mennonites brought quick rebuttal. Nina Dodge, representative in East Jerusalem of the American Friends Service Committee (Quakers) and Harold Dick sent an immediate reply that "for the record, neither the AFSC, nor the MCC are associated in any way with Dr Awad and his seminar."

Awad told *Al Fajr* later that the initiative was his alone and that no one else was responsible for it. He denied the *Post* report and said his personal beliefs were influenced by these two religious peace groups, but that he has no official or unofficial ties with them.

Awad also denied any connection with the Peace Now movement or any other Israeli group. "The movement has to grow here naturally," he said.

The seminar was also addressed by Palestinian lawyer Jonathan Kuttab, who spoke on the international non-violent movement and its implications for the Palestinian struggle. He said his ideas were influenced by India's Mahatma Gandhi and the US black civil rights activist, Martin Luther King. He gave as examples of non-violence in the local struggle the six months strike during the 1936 rebellion, Bassam Shaka'a's and the Nafha prisoners' hunger strikes and the resistance of the 13,000 Syrian residents ofthe Golan Heights against Israeli atempts to force Israeli citizenship on them after the annexation in 1981.

Jerusalem Peace List: 'No to Annexation'

An election list under the name of "Peace List," consisting of Israeli peace and left forces, is running in the Jerusalem municipal elections, under the slogan of "No to the Annexation and Oppression in Jerusalem."

The Peace List, which consists of 26 candidates, is the only one among the 15 lists running not recognising the annexation of East Jerusalem. The initiators and supporters of this list come from Uri Avneri's Sheli Alternative, the Israeli socialist left – Shasi, the Israeli Communist Party, the Committee Against the War in Lebanon, the Bir Zeit solidarity committee, the Black Panthers, some non-partisan individuals and a number of war resisters.

Noam Kaminer, the second candidate on the list, told *Al Fajr* that they sponsored the Peace List because they believe that the solution of the problems of Jerusalem should be part of the solution for the Palestinian problem. "All the other lists compete for who can annex Jerusalem more," remarked Kaminer. "But we believe that East Jersusalem should enjoy Palestinian sovereignty and be the capital of the future Palestinian state."

Regarding voting, he said that they respect the will of the residents of East Jerusalem to boycott the municipal elections. But their manifesto does not include an open call for boycott.

The list is headed by Ya'acov Amon, the former director general of the finance ministry. Earlier this year, Amon caused controversy when he and two colleagues from Sheli met PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat in Tunis and released a joint statement with him.

Ya'acov Arnon

List activists expect to win one seat in the municipality: "The fact that we succeeded in forming such a list, the first of its kind in Jerusalem, is a big achievement." Kaminer added that this new step is part of the "struggle of the Israeli peace camp."

One hundred and forty-five local and municipal councils will hold elections on October 25, among them 26 Palestinian local councils in the Galilee and the Triangle.

The Israeli High Court has forced the Israeli interior minister to allow voters in Iblin and Maghar to have council elections. Other Palestinian local councils inside the 'green line', like Beqa'a and Shaab, are still barred.

The Israeli interior ministry has also refrained from holding elections in the five Syrian villages in the recently annexed Golan Heights.

YIGAL COHEN-ORGAD – REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COLONIAL BOURGEOISIE

Portrait of an Extremist

by Tamar Godzinski

Yigal Cohen-Orgad has been sworn in as the new finance minister in Yitzhak Shamir's cabinet. It appears another hawk has been added to the government.

Cohen-Orgad is an extremist. He voted against the Camp David agreements, along with Defence Minister Moshe Arens and Shamir himself. He enthusiastically supports the Gush Emunim. He is not simply a settler who built himself a villa in Ariel and who calls for more (Israeli) government investments in the occupied territories. Cohen-Orgad opposed Camp David because he is a loyal representative of an exclusive social class which looks at the world through a certain socio-economic perspective. Cohen-Orgad represents the colonial bourgeoisie which has developed and become strong in Israel since 1967.

What distinguishes this group of capitalists from the Israeli bourgeoisie in general is the centrality of the occupied territories in its economic plans. It is true there are a large number of capitalists and industrialists who own companies reaping huge profits from the employment of a large number of workers from the occupied territories and because of military means. But there is among them a group of capitalists which invests heavily in the occupied territories and builds industry in them, which means it will have total control over the economies of the West Bank, Gaza and South Lebanon, if circumstances permit.

Cohen-Orgad is the president of Eitim, which he and 23 other shareholders who are known for their hawkish opinions and political work established in June 1982.

Some of Cohen-Orgad's partners are Herut personalities like Rubin Hecht and David Kremerman of Labud Plywood Industry, who took advantage of the government's generous support for the building industry in the occupied territories and thereby increased their expansionist approach.

Eitim has so far built three electronics plants in West Bank settlements. These plants do not and will not pay income tax, by exploiting laws which encourage investment and also apply to West Bank investments.

Appointing Cohen-Orgad, the colonialist-bourgeoisie representative, to run the economy will lead to only one thing: continued occupation and settlement. He is known to be anxious to cut money allocated for social services like education and health and to end all government subsidies to essential products and transportation. He is also in favour of raising taxes on workers. Cohen-Orgad also opposes defence cuts and supports increased budgets for settlements in the occupied territories. Cohen-Orgad's social theories are loyal to conservative bourgeois economics, which link "saving the economy" to reducing the standard of living of workers. In practice, appointing Cohen-Orgad aims at abolishing the cost-of-living increments and raising unemployment.

Cohen-Orgad will be a finance minister worse and more dangerous than his predecessor Yoram Aridor, with all that means in the military economy: a colonial economy, attacks on the standard of living and workers' rights, increased poverty and threats to democratic freedom. (Translation: Al Ittihad, October 19).

Tamar Godzinski is a member of the political department of the Israeli Communist Party.

WEEKLY REVIEW

October 12, 1983

BUILDING PERMITS NEEDED

JERUSALEM — Israeli military authorities in Bethlehem ordered 20 house owners in Wadi Fukin to obtain permits within a week for the houses they erected before and after 1967, or the houses will be demolished.

SHARON SAYS TABA IS ISRAELI

TEL AVIV — Former Defence Minister Ariel Sharon, speaking in front of a crowd of 400 people in Eilat, said the area disputed over by Israel and Egypt, Taba, is part of Eilat and therefore should remain with Israel — contrary to the US-Israel-Egypt Camp David accords.

THIRD WORST ECONOMY

TEL AVIV — A study by the International Labour Organisation said Israel enjoys third place in world inflation rates, with a 131% official annual rate. Bolivia is first with 296%, followed by Argentina with a 209% annual inflation rate.

Israel's inflation rate is expected to hit the 200% mark this year following the recent economic crisis.

EGYPT BACK WITH JORDAN

AMMAN — Egyptian newspapers and magazines are back on news stands in Jordan after a four-year absence. Arab countries boycotted all relations with Egypt after it signed the Camp David agreement in 1978.

October 13, 1983

MAYORS DISMISSED FOREVER

TEL AVIV — General Binyamin Ben Eliezer, Arab affairs officer in the Israeli government, said he opposes any decision to allow the dismissed West Bank mayors from resuming political activities. He said he has no intention of talking to any of the mayors.

ARRESTS IN JERICHO

JERUSALEM — More than 40 people were rounded up in Jericho last Friday and questioned about an explosion in an Israeli military car.

Jericho citizens said the bomb was dropped by one of the soldiers inside the car. They said the soldier was drunk, and his companions had to restrain him from shooting at Palestinian pedestrians.

October 14, 1983

PALESTINIAN PASSPORTS

KUWAIT — The PLO will introduce a resolution during the forthcoming Arab summit in Saudi Arabia asking that a Palestinian passport be recognised as an official document, Palestinian sources said.

TEHIYA URGES RACISM

TEL AVIV — The Israeli ultra-religious Tehiya Party called on residents of Jewish settlements around Jerusalem who are receiving electricity from the Arab Jerusalem Electric Company to look for alternatives. The movement has been active in demanding that the Israeli electric company take over the JEC.

The Israeli military authorities claimed Attiyeh was "killed in an explosion" after his body was found, October 6, near Nablus.

Some of his family members who were earlier arrested have been released.

October 16, 1983

UNION EXECUTIVE RESIGNS

JERUSALEM — In an emergency meeting held at the Executive Committee of the Labour Unions' office in Jersusalem, the committee members said in order to conserve the unity of the labour movement in the West Bank and to resolve any internal disagreement, the Executive Committee, headed by Shehadeh Minawi, has decided to resign, as of October 21.

Lawyer Mark Lane, centre, lawyer Felicia Langer, far left, and five of the plaintiffs in a US suit demanding the removal of the tax-exempt status of American Zionist organisations, address a Jerusalem press conference, October 16. Several of the plaintiffs were prevented from attending the conference./LK

October 15

ASTRONOMICAL TAXES

BETHLEHEM — Israeli officials ordered all doctors here to pay tax bills, some of which exceeded IS100,000.

WATER POLLUTION

JALJULIYA — Residents of the village of Jaljuliya, south of Qalqiliya but inside the 'green line', have been complaining of polluted drinking water in their village. The villagers fear nearby sewage has leaked into their supply.

DABKEH IN BIR ZEIT

BIR ZEIT —*Joudhour* (Roots) dancing group at Bir Zeit University put on a *dabkeh* show as part of a Palestinian folk evening on campus. The Cafeteria Committee screened the film "Beirut — Our Last Tent." Large crowds attended both events.

WAGE INCREASE DEMANDED

RAMALLAH — The Union of Construction Workers in Ramallah appealed to employers to raise workers' wages in light of the recent increases in the cost-of-living. They asked that construction workers be paid in Jordanian dinars rather than Israeli shekels.

MIDNIGHT BURIAL

JENIN — The body of Mohammed Attiyeh, 25, was quietly buried at midnight in the presence of seven members of his family in a the curfewed village of Sileh.

UNREAL ESTATE

HALHOUL — The Israeli authorities informed two house owners and another owner of a quarry that their property will be demolished. The order said they erected their buildings on land outside the city limits without a permit.

Hijazi Madiek, acting mayor of Halhoul, said the property falls within the municipality's jurisdiction according to a 1972 blueprint of the city boundaries. He said the Israeli authorities have drawn for themselves a new zoning map of the city.

The demolition order was set for October 18.

COST-OF-LIVING X 2000

TEL AVIV — The Central Bureau of Statistics reported the cost-of-living in Israel increased 1997.4 times since 1951.

LUCRATIVE HOLIDAY

TEL AVIV — About US$40 million was collected by more than 1000 Jewish institutions in the US during the last Jewish holidays.

Yehudi Halavi, president of the Israel Bonds Organisation, said it was the most intensive campaign by his organisation to collect contributions for Israel since 1951.

MORE RESISTERS

TEL AVIV — Two more Israeli reservists were sentenced to 35-day jail terms for refusing to serv in Lebanon. This raises to 106 the number of soldiers who refused their orders.

October 17, 1983

SHAKA'A REQUESTS EXIT VISA

TEL AVIV — Lawyer Felicia Langer requested the Israeli military governor on behalf of Bassam Shaka'a for permission to leave the country to the United States for health care.

Langer said in her request the dismissed mayor of Nablus needs medical attention on his amputated legs, which are causing him severe pain. While he is there, she said, Shaka'a will be honoured by the Livonia City Hall in the state of Michigan. Shaka'a received an invitation from the mayor of Livonia to visit the city and receive the city's key.

SQUEEZE ON REFUGEES

DHEISHEH — The Dheisheh Youth Club appealed to UNRWA officials to allow refugees in the camp to add a second storey to their houses. The club management said it does not see any reason for UNRWA's decision not to give building permits to camp residents. It said this policy will force some of the refugees to leave the camp in search of housing.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT CHARGED

RAMALLAH — The Israeli military court ordered Halimeh Hasson, a secondary school student from Bir Zeit, to pay IS15,000 after she was convicted of demonstrating against the occupation.

DEMONSTRATIONS IN NAZARETH

Israeli human rights groups demonstrated in Upper Nazareth supporting Palestinians' right to live there. Anti-Arab demonstrators organised a counter-protest.

EQUAL PAY FOR TEACHERS

RAMALLAH — Heads of the education department in the West Bank met to discuss the impact of the recent economic measures on the salaries and conditions of teachers. The heads decided to ask the Israeli military government to help improve conditions of teachers by paying salaries at a level comparable to that of the Israeli teachers.

VISITORS TO DHEISHEH

DHEISHEH — The head of the Frere's-run academic institutions and three of his advisors visited Dheisheh refugee camp and met some of the camp's residents. They were briefed on camp conditions, particularly after the Israeli military closed all the main roads in the camp.

YA'ABAD PUNISHMENT

YA'ABAD — Unknown arsonists set fire to a car owned by the head of the Ya'abad local council. He was reported to have met with Israeli civil administrator of the West Bank Shlomo Elia one week ago.

October 18, 1983

NEW MINISTER PROMOTES DISCRIMINATION

TEL AVIV — Israel's new Finance Minister, Yigal Cohen-Orgad, member of Yitzhak Shamir's Herut Party, said Israel should develop Jerusalem in a way that will not encourage Arabs to come to it in search of employment. This, he said, will preserve the Jewish structure of the city.

Cohen-Orgad said Israel should keep the occupied territories, allow the army to freely operate in them and give the Jewish settlements self-rule.

JORDAN SENTENCES LAND DEALER

NABLUS — The Jordanian authorities arrested a Nablus resident on the Damieh Bridge and charged him with selling land to non-Arabs using forged documents. He was sentenced in a military court to 20 years.

PRICE OF ELECTRICITY INCREASES

TEL AVIV — The finance committee in the Knesset decided to raise electricity prices by 12 percent, retroactive to October 3. The committee will consider an energy ministry request for a further 40 percent hike soon.

The minister of communication asked for a 50 percent increase in postal charges.

CHARGES DROPPED

NABLUS — Charges of possession of banned books against *Al Mithaq* correspondent in Nablus, Ghazi Abu Kishk, were dropped. The Nablus military court said in its decision that the charges were old and had been heard before.

VISITOR BANNED FROM LEAVING

NABLUS — Film director Yusef Shaiban was refused an exit permit. He came with his wife to visit his family in Nablus a month ago and is now prevented from returning to his work in Yemen.

THE DEMISE OF THE MIGHTY SHEKEL

by John Richardson

This article is largely based on an extended interview with Emmanuel Farjoun, Hebrew University Mathematics lecturer and expert on Palestinian labour in the Israeli economy.

After months of almost total neglect since the announcement by ex-premier Menachem Begin that he intended to resign, the Israeli economy virtually collapsed this month. Trading on the stock market was suspended, October 9, and foreign exchanges closed the next day after a burst of bank share sellings. Speculators were liquidating stocks to invest in foreign currency, particularly the US dollar.

Local banking experts blame the present panic on the Likud's continued protection of economic policies which have no proper basis. They point out that the Israeli shekel was grossly overvalued against the US dollar — leading to a wave of consumerism — and that stock market speculation, a mass pursuit in Israel, led to unrealistic values of some shares and a popular belief that they could only go up. Some banks' shares had a value of over 350 percent of their assets before the recent collapse.

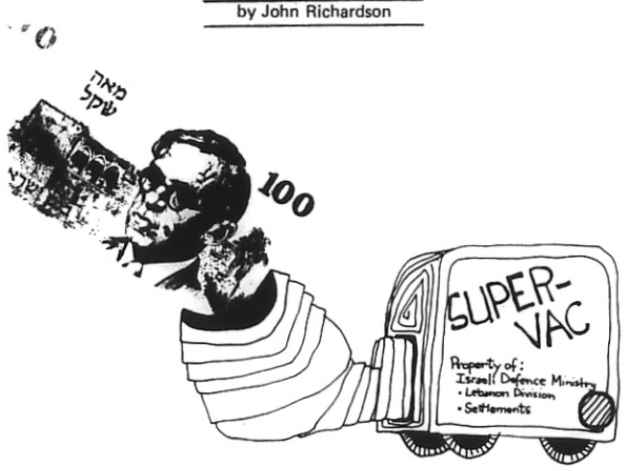
The crash took finance minister Yoram Aridor down with it. His panic proposal to do away with the undependable shekel altogether and replace it with the US dollar unleashed such howls of protest that he was forced to quit.

The reason for Israel's tenuous economic situation is, in Israeli professor Emmanuel Farjoun's words, its "empire-building" which it simply cannot afford. Ironically, the country has two major strengths which most third world countries would covet: its access to foreign cash and a burgeoning arms production sector. Unlike any other country, Israel has a virtually guaranteed unearned dollar income of US$3.5 billion per annum from the United States government. Added to this is its massive income in tax-deductable donations from Jewish communities in the US — estimated at between US$0.75-1 billion by lawyer Mark Lane, who is filing a suit against Zionist charities at present — plus donations from other countries and West German reparations to individuals and the state.

Israel has between US$4.5 and 9 billion stashed in foreign banks and bringing in a tidy income. Its reputation with the international banking community remains good because of these deposits and because it pays back its debts. Thus, despite its chronic economic situation, Israel's name is not on the list of chronic debtor nations like Poland, Brazil, Argentina and Mexico, whose ruin could destroy the delicate international finance network.

Also on the credit side of the balance is Israel's highly sophisticated military-industrial complex. With close links to the latest US technology, it churns out ultra-modern electronics and armaments. Last year, arms exports were in the region of US$1 billion. In the more traditional arms sphere, Israel is increasingly taking on the role of gun-runner to the regimes, particularly in Latin America, the US would prefer not to deal with directly.

Despite all this, however, real internal production, the strongest basis for a sound economy, is not enough to satisfy the expense of Israel's imperial designs. One aspect of this is Israel's huge military expenditure. Occupation of foreign territory and wars are costly affairs, and since the defeats of 1973, Israel's standing army has tripled in size. Alongside this increase, military salaries have been doubled in real terms, which has forced increased expenditure on hardware, construction of bases, mobilisation and supply of reserves (now serving 60 rather than 30 days per man annually). And of course cash is needed to keep the necessary bureaucracy well-oiled.



Concomitantly, with the expansion of the army there are fewer workers in production. Israel, with only about 32 percent of the workforce in productive industry, is similar to countries like India and Sudan. Most Western countries have 50 percent of their workers in factories. This, says Farjoun, is the root of Israel's problems and one which is unsurmountable with the present configuration of political forces.

back-up in the control of inflation. Depressing the dollar price became a way of lowering, or at least maintaining, inflation. It eventually destroyed the policy of encouraging exports, and despite the arms industry all other sectors declined as capital owners recognised that marketing and distributing 'cheap' dollar-import items was more profitable. A cycle of marketing for shekels, buying dollars and importing was created.

At the same time, with inflation

ARMS FOR THE ASKING

The US tentatively agreed October 17 to arm Israel free-of-charge, according to the *Middle East Policy Survey*, a pro-Zionist Washington newsletter. The proposal, worked out between former Israeli Finance Minister Yoram Aridor and the US State Department and Budget Office, would grant Israel US $1.275 billion in military assistance — 25 percent less than the proposed military budget for Israel but with the advantage of it being in the form of an outright gift.

Israel had been scheduled to receive US $1.7 billion, half in grants and half in long-term, low-interest loans. The new proposal, which is opposed by Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Arens because it compromises Israel's overall arms budget, this year, for the sake of a better financial deal, could set a precedent of all-grant, no-loan aid to Israel.

According to the newsletter, reported in *The Jerusalem Post*, October 18, the Israeli defence ministry still has US $ 1billion in its coffers of unspent US aid. The military assistance is in addition to an almost like amount of annual economic grants and loans. Israel receives one-third of all US foreign aid.

Playing the Market

Given this fundamental structural problem, Israel's economic managers ran the country "like a small grocery store," notes Farjoun. They tried at first to finance it from outside funds, but this proved impossible given the volume of imports and therefore they resorted to inflation and printing money as a tool. The basis of Likud economics thus evolved: manipulating the value of the dollar; printing more or fewer shekels and keeping the populace in the dark. "They succeeded for the last five years," notes Farjoun.

Printing cash and then later compensating workers meant the finance ministers were living on the three months between the time inflation accelerated and the time it was reflected in the official index. Anyway indexation was only 85 percent. Since in a 'free' economy controlling prices or nationalisation are anathema, inflation and bribery are the way out. The government underwrote loans linked at only 80-100 percent of the shekel value.

This inflation-printing press system has flexibility but its nemesis was bound to catch up with it in the end. That happened this month. The element which provoked the moment of truth was the dollar price. Dollars had been used as a well entrenched, people became more and more concerned to keep the value of their cash. As in pre-crash Argentina, the local currency got stronger and stronger — it grew about 30 percent against the dollar in the past year. With inflation at 0.5 percent a day, investment in productive areas was no guarantee of profit. The only way out was for the Likud to guarantee and index cash itself.

Then the banks moved in big. The more money they could get investors to deposit with them the more they could profit from dollar-for-dollar-plus-30-percent government bankrolling. They developed a unique-to-Israel system of "running" stocks (illegal in the US and Britain). Through subsidiaries they would buy their own stocks and therefore increase demand, making them look more attractive at the same time. When you are paying the money to yourself ("your own company supplies and demands," in Farjoun's words) the price can be virtually anything. This determination became known as "fine tuning" in financial circles, and was pushing up real shekel prices at 30 percent a year (60 percent in dollar terms).

The one bank which did not run its stocks, the First International Bank, saw its shares tumble earlier this year, along with all manufacturing bonds.

Government-backed money growth expanded exponentially. But it was draining the economy. Printed money was going into banks, then inflated to the people who spent it on expensive consumer goods and foreign holidays — Israel has the largest per capita ownership of videos in the world.

It was ultimately paid for by increasing foreign debt. Over five years, debt grew from US$11 billion to US$22 billion. But, unable, in former US President Abraham Lincoln's words, to fool all of the people all of the time, the dollar had to come down. About one-fifth of the total Israeli population had foreign holidays this year, and must have seen the ridiculousness of the currency's rate against the shekel.

Confidence in the finance ministry, bruised by the stocks crash earlier this year, collapsed when Aridor lied about the devaluation of the shekel last month. When he started denying he would devalue again, people sold all they could to get hold of dollars. This included the bank shares, now run to many times their value. The banks, after fruitless attempts to maintain buy-up surpluses at a cost, it is estimated, of US$350 million, called in the government.

Despite the irresponsibility they had shown, the banks were supported — 40 percent of the credit Israel gets flows through these institutions and therefore stability was essential if it did not want to get on bankers' bad-risk list.

To put it crudely, the government did this by robbing the people. Shares trading was suspended, October 9, dollar trading the next day and on October 11 both were slashed by 30 percent. Estimates of personal losses accrued in the fall run to several thousand dollars per Israeli family.

The various plans being suggested are, points out Farjoun, so much window-dressing. Only production can guarantee a stable economy and Israel's political aspirations as a regional power and the burgeoning settlements rule out the country ever getting straight.

Meanwhile, people — or in this case "investors" — do not believe either the bankers or the government. This, predicts Farjoun, will have disastrous repercussions for the economy. With inflation leaping to around 160 percent, the rush to maintain the value of savings will be compounded. The government will still not be able to sell its bonds, and people will be watching for hikes in the dollar. Farjoun predicts Premier Shamir will try the same tactics as his predecessors.

And what of the political flak? Aridor has gone; will the rest of the coalition survive? Farjoun says yes, predicting they will hold on at any cost, uniting the fragments as best they can. Over the next year, he predicts some adventurist military policies (*a la* Iraqi reactor bombing) plus the announcement that the economy is "in order" by flooding a billion or so dollars to the public like they did last time. Elections then, he says, would give a chance for an Agudat Israel- (who want money for the religious) or Tami- (who want it for the Israeli poor) free coalition and the political possibility of extracting the dollar from the people once and for all.

This is a controversial view. Michel Warshawsky, Revolutionary Communist League Secretary and candidate for the Jerusalem municipality on the Peace List, predicts the coalition will not survive — unable to implement policies that would either boost unemployment or lower the standard of living. "Because of the feudal structure of the government, every minister bribes people to vote for their list," he says. "No one will allow cuts in their own budgets."

You pays your money and you takes your choice — but don't do it in shekels!

The Assyrians: At Home in Jerusalem Since Ancient Times

by Awad Abdel Fattah

The front door of the Syrian Orthodox Church (left), religious centre for Jerusalem's Assyrian community, dates back to the Byzantine era. Right, deacon Khalil Khano poses below an ornate cupola in the richly decorated Church of St. Mark.

One visit to the Old City of Jerusalem is not enough to notice the ethnic diversity in the plethora of communities who have made it their home, let alone to be aware of what their lives are like. If it is easier to recognise Armenians, not all of whom master the Arab accent, it is impossible to distinguish Assyrians unless involved in discussion with them.

In fact, all the ethnic communities of the Old City of Jerusalem use Arabic in their daily dealings with the Palestinian population, but the Assyrians in particular use Arabic even with each other and have integrated themselves into the Arab population. But they still retain their original language, Assyrian, which they consider one of the Arabic dialects.

The story of the Assyrian presence in the Old City is no different from that of the Armenians. Both claim roots over the centuries for religious reasons connected with the Christian holy places in the city. They both also suffered more than one forced emigration from Turkey following the massacres committed against the Armenians and Assyrians and expulsion from a number of Palestinian towns within the 1948 borders of Israel.

According to the community's deputy patriarch Donesius Dajjawa, the Turkish killed 150,000 Assyrians in 1915.

The Assyrian quarter is situated in Mount Zion, far from the noise of the crowded bazaar of the Old City. In this calm part of the city among the first things which catches the eyes is the grandly-built monastery of the Assyrian community where a bold inscription fixed above the entrance reads "St. Mark's Monastery." A few metres away there is the Assyrian club, closed in the mid day.

The history of the monastery, which includes a church, is known by heart by Dajjawa, who was recently upgraded from community religious clerk serving in various Arab countries to his current post. He enthusiastically relates the Assyrians' historic experience in Jerusalem and backs his talk with history books kept in the convent's reception room.

"Because Jerusalem was subject to destruction several times and has been ransacked by many conquerors," said Dajjawi, "St. Mark's Church had no different fate than other churches and institutions."

According to the history books, he explained, in AD 70 the church was destroyed by the Roman Emperor Titus, then in the seventh century AD by the Persians and in AD 1009 by the Egyptian Fatimi Caliph al-Hakim Fatimi. The last destruction of the church was carried out in the time of the Crusaders.

"Although this monastery including the church was destroyed again and again it was rebuilt and restored each time," said Khalil Khano, the head of the St. Mark's Monastery's three-member committee which oversees internal affairs.

Since 1858, the monastery was kept intact and left in its original shape with the exception of new rooms which were added to it recently.

Who are the Assyrians? They are the descendants of the ancient Aramean people who were the original inhabitants of what is called the Fertile Crescent, later known as "Greater Syria." The Fertile Crescent includes present day Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, part of Palestine, Jordan and part of modern Turkey. They were centred in the area between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

Entrance to the Syriac Orthodox Club: "All that happens to the Palestinian population is reflected on us, since we are a part of this population."

Recent History

The Assyrian community in Jerusalem now numbers less than 500 people. The political and economic disaster from the 1948 and the 1967 wars resulted in a sharp decline in the size of the Jerusalem community. Hundreds of Assyrian families fled Jaffa, Haifa and Acre, Palestinian cities within the 1948 borders of Israel, to Jerusalem, where they were received at St. Mark's Monastery. They moved on very shortly later to some Arab countries, mainly Jordan, because of acute overcrowdedness and consequent lack of absorbtion possibilities. Like any other Palestinian refugee, they lost all their property, houses, land and most of their belongings. "Our situation was terrible," said an old man who was raised in Haifa.

However, at the same time, some Assyrians moved to Bethlehem, where there are now about 2500 Assyrians. The flow to Bethlehem has not stopped since 1948, where "people could find a solution to their housing problem," said Khalil Khano. In Bethlehem the Assyrians also have a monastery and a church.

The two elementary schools of the community have closed: one in 1948 and the other in 1967. Since then, the children of the community have been dispersed to the Arab Palestinian schools in the Old City. Currently, the monastery's affairs committee is trying to build a school in the quarter. One member of the committee attributed the closure of the schools to the drop in the number of the Jerusalem-based Assyrian community. Others, however, spoke more frankly. "In fact the hostile and racist Israeli policy has been behind the suffering which the community in Palestine has so far undergone," one man explained. The second school was taken over by the Israelis and 30 Assyrian families who were living in the neighbouring Jewish quarter were forced out at the beginning of the 1970s, when the quarter was made an exclusively Jewish settlement.

Language Is Kept

Although Arabic is the spoken language of the community, Assyrian is not neglected or forgotten. Almost every member of the community masters Assyrian in childhood. The language which the Assyrian church still employs in its daily services in reciting the prayers is the Assyrian (Aramaic) language. Also, in the community's club, Assyrian language teaching courses are organised every summer by the monastery's committee.

Other activities are also organised in the club, such as sports, music, lectures and scouts. According to Khalil Khano, relations between the Assyrian club and other clubs in Jerusalem are good.

The club issued magazines before 1948 and since then the Assyrian community has maintained a press where other Arabic, Jerusalem-based newspapers, such as *Al Jihad*, were printed. But none of the magazines lasted more than five years. The latest community paper, *Aram*, which dealt only with local and religious news and information, was less than two years old when it closed in 1970. Financial crises and emigration of staff halted these magazines, according to the community representatives.

The Assyrian community does not feel itself a foreign community in Jerusalem. "We are Arabs, why should we feel alien?" wondered Samir Konz, a shopowner. He said they consider themselves part of the Arab people. "And historically and scientifically this is true," he concluded.

Others do not differ on this. Dajjawa said that Assyrian is an Arabic dialect. He has studied the history of the Assyrians in the shadow of the Arab Islamic Empire. "According to all historical documents," he elaborated, "Assyrians were treated kindly and equally by the Muslim Arabs and they contributed to the progress of the Arab Islamic civilisation."

When asked about specific problems, the answer is universal: "All that happens to the Palestinian population in Jerusalem is reflected on us, since we are part of this population."